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Middle East News

JORDAN TIMES, WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 24, 1994

Palestinian authority faces test in preventing blood feuds

RAFAH (AFP) — Faithful to bedouin tradition, the family of a 16-year-old boy recently killed in a clash with Palestinian police initially refused to bury his body.

Only after senior Palestinian officials promised a speedy investigation did the elders take possession of Saleh Al Shaer's body, instead of first killing a member of another bedouin family in revenge.

In its first serious test case, the new Palestinian National Authority (PNA) may face a tough task in enforcing the law and preventing blood feuds among families tied to ancient traditions.

Shaer was killed Saturday night after police stopped a group of youngsters during a search for criminals. A fight broke out and the police fired in the air and at random, fatally wounding the teenager.

Palestinian police said he was killed in a police chase, and the seven policemen involved are now under investigation, said Prosecutor General Khaled Al Qudra.

"It's true that tribal traditions are important," Mr. Qudra said.

"But the people also have faith in the law."

Under the pre-1967 Egyptian law in force in the autonomous Gaza Strip the death penalty can be applied for premeditated murder.

Mohammad Al Shaer, an uncle of the dead teenager, argued that it would be "impossible to make peace with the guilty family."

"We now have a pact, a waiting period until the guilty

person is executed according to Islam and our law."

"The killer must be executed, or people will start shooting and taking the law into their own hands," he warned.

It was not the custom among the bedouin to bury the body "until someone, anyone, from the guilty family has been killed," he explained.

The tradition of blood feuds was suspended during the 27-year Israeli occupation to avoid internal strife and undermining Palestinian resistance.

"Our young activists used to mask their faces and warn people not to shed blood, and we used to reconcile opposing families."

"But that has finished now. We have our national authority and we want a public trial and public execution," Mohammad Al Shaer said.

The Shaer family claims to have 40,000 members in Gaza and its nomadic lineage goes back a long way.

They settled in Rafah and became urbanised but still revert to their old customs.

Their influence in Rafah was evident when more than 1,200 people turned up at a funeral Monday, including senior police and intelligence officers.

There were angry scenes Sunday when hundreds of people marched on the house of the Palestinian policeman they believed shot the youth.

The family of 1st Lieutenant Musa Abu Samahdana, who is being held for questioning in the case, also has a bedouin background.

Although much fewer in number than the Shaer, the Abu Samahdanas have a reputation for toughness, acquired during the intifada.

They executed more than 30 alleged collaborators with Israel, according to witnesses.

At least three of the family members, including Musa, are now in the Palestinian police and intelligence forces.

Both families trade accusations of drug dealing, prostitution and collaboration with Israel, according to witnesses.

"During the intifada, our family was in charge of safeguarding morals here," said Suleiman Abu Samahdana, a brother of Musa.

In the name of Fatah Hawks, loyal to Yasser Arafat, "we used to beat some people, put them under house arrest and kill them if necessary," he said, adding that many of those "punished" were from the Shaer family.

But Abu Samahdana laughed off any possibility of vendetta killings.

"We never killed on a personal level, always as Fatah Hawks."

If everyone takes revenge on us for the killings, there will be no more Abu Samahdanas left."

He insisted his brother Musa was innocent.

"If there is an open trial and enough evidence to implicate him, we will accept the court's decision.

"But if they pass a sentence just to satisfy the Shaer family, we will reject it," he said.



LEBANON-CYPRUS TIES: Cyprus Foreign Minister Alekos Michaelides (left) shakes the second day of his official visit to Lebanon hands on Tuesday with Lebanese President (AFP photo)

Diplomats in dark in Egypt-Sudan dispute

CAIRO (AP) — Sudanese and Egyptian diplomats have a dim view of each other these days. Cutting electricity to each other's embassy has become the latest tactic in a diplomatic battle.

Diplomats on both sides also reported that they have no running water and few telephone lines.

The utility duel is the latest episode in the deepening rift between Egypt and Sudan that involves a land dispute along with allegations of terrorism and mistreatment of diplomats.

Sudan's embassy in Cairo has been without electricity and water since last Thursday, diplomats told the Associated Press as they sat in their hot, dark quarters.

"This is an escalation and retaliation," said Ibrahim Matar, the Sudanese consul. "We have a problem."

The telephone operator at Egypt's embassy in the Sudanese capital Khartoum said the building had been without light and water since Sunday.

Egypt's Middle East News Agency (MENA) said that electricity and water also had been cut to Egypt's defence office in Khartoum.

In recent weeks, both sides have filed formal protests about diplomats being roughed up on the streets.

And Cairo has complained that Sudan has confiscated a number of rest houses used by agricultural teams, homes used by teachers and the Egyptians' social club in Khartoum.

Hassan Gad Al Haq, Egypt's ambassador to Sudan who currently is here on holiday, called for an end to the tit-for-tat incidents.

"If there were any differences between the two countries, they should be solved within a framework of understanding," Mr. Haq said. "We should solve our problems in a civilised manner."

He said there were no plans to reduce Egypt's diplomatic presence in Sudan and added that a planned Egypt-Sudan soccer match would be held as scheduled Sept. 5 in Khartoum.

Relations between the neighbouring countries began souring during the 1990-91 Gulf crisis, in which Sudan backed Iraq while Egypt participated in the U.S.-led coalition that liberated Kuwait.

Reports of new clashes at the weekend among the top two factions and Islamic militants underscored the tenuous hold of the local government, a power-sharing deal between the (KDP) and the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK).

The parties said on June 23 they had resolved their dispute after talks in Paris, but Mr. Dizayee reported more sporadic fighting.

Freed prisoners see Jericho as new jail

JERICHO (AP) — The self-rule enclave of Jericho in the West Bank may hold out the promise of freedom for some, but for one group of Palestinians released by Israel, Jericho has come to resemble a new prison.

Abdul Jabbar Ahmad Daud was freed from Israeli detention last week, but he is still unhappy.

"It feels like being transferred from one cell to another bigger one. I don't feel the joy of liberation," Mr. Abdul Jabbar explained, pacing up and down the school yard serving as the former prisoners' new home.

He was among 250 detainees released on condition that they completed their sentences inside the 52-square-kilometre self-rule area.

"My family came to visit yesterday, but they went back to Hebron soon after. We hardly have enough room ourselves to sleep here," he said.

Another former prisoner, Fathi Gaith, complained that up to 15 were sleeping to one room, "in suffocating heat."

Lacking privacy, the former prisoners have found that the school yard is the most practical place to meet their families.

Defying the overcrowding,

Um Mahmud, wife of Kamel Kamhawi, spent the night in the school yard with her five children so as to be close to her 45-year-old husband.

"Our joy is not complete since my husband cannot go home to Nablus, another West Bank town," she said.

But she acknowledged that the Palestinian Authority was treating the prisoners' families well during their stay, giving them food and mattresses.

At the entrance to the school an armed Palestinian guard takes the papers of visitors and returns them when they leave.

Most of those formerly held in Israeli jails were charged with killing suspected Palestinian collaborators, and the authorities want to prevent revenge attacks by the victims' families.

Iranian radio said "heavy casualties" were inflicted in fighting in the Qala Dizeh region. There was no independent report on the number of casualties.

Mr. Dizayee said Iraqi Kurds looked to elections, due in May, for a realistic shift in power and a more streamlined government.

The PUK's Ankara spokesman denied the system had collapsed.

"The system is not so fine," said Shazad Saib.

"There are unsolved problems. But it has not collapsed — I deny that. If both parties are very sincere this can work."

Kurds took control of much of northern Iraq after Western forces provided protection following the 1991 Gulf war. In 1992 they held elections, setting up a regional government with the PUK and the PUK sharing power.

But the last two years have witnessed much strife between the two groups in power as well as Muslim militant factions.

The parties said on June 23 they had resolved their dispute after talks in Paris, but Mr. Dizayee reported more sporadic fighting.

Red tape and tension hamper Kurdish rule

ANKARA (R) — Tension between feuding factions in northern Iraq and bureaucratic red tape in the de-facto Kurdish government have led to deep fissures in the local administration, spokesman for the Iraqi Kurds say.

"In the 1992 elections the outcome was a 50-50 balance of power, which was necessary at the time," said Safiyye Dizayee, Ankara representative of the Kurdish Democratic Party (KDP).

"That worked when everybody, including international media, focused on us," he said. "But now the system has virtually collapsed with all the bureaucracy and red tape involved."

The English-language Turkish Daily News quoted an Iraqi Kurdish official as saying: "The (50-50) scheme resulted in duality in administrations, duality in military set-up, duality in all forms and thus created bottlenecks."

Reports of new clashes at the weekend among the top two factions and Islamic militants underscored the tenuous hold of the local government, a power-sharing deal between the (KDP) and the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK).

The parties said on June 23 they had resolved their dispute after talks in Paris, but Mr. Dizayee reported more sporadic fighting.

Australia to reopen embassy in Beirut

CANBERRA (AFP) — Australian Prime Minister Paul Keating announced Tuesday that his government would reopen an embassy in the Lebanese capital Beirut, closed 10 years ago because of fighting. "The government has decided to reopen the Australian embassy in Beirut, and to reopen it by June 1995," Mr. Keating told reporters here.

Mr. Keating said the government believed the security situation had improved in Beirut although it was not means perfect. He did not name an ambassador.

Bethlehem to have first Palestinian Christmas

BETHLEHEM (AP) —

Palestinians will be in charge of Christmas celebrations in the city where Jesus was born for the first time this year, the Israeli and Palestinian tourism ministers said Monday.

"This Christmas will be under the Palestinian authority," Israeli Tourism Minister Uzi Barani told reporters after meeting with Elias Freij, who doubles as Palestinian tourism minister and mayor of Bethlehem.

"We would like to celebrate Christmas this year under the flag of peace," Mr. Freij joined in. He added that he was considering inviting world leaders to Bethlehem for the event.

It would be a sharp contrast to recent years, when Mr. Freij led efforts each year between 1987 and 1992 to shut the city of 30,000 down at Christmas because of the Palestinian uprising, and Israel's tourism ministry did its best to bring in Christian pilgrims.

Mr. Barani said that the Palestinians would have control of tourism as part of the "early empowerment" phase of the Israeli-Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) peace accord according to which Palestinian authority will extend from the self-rule areas in the Gaza Strip and

Jericho into the rest of the West Bank.

The Palestinians are due to assume control of education throughout the West Bank this week, and Israeli and Palestinian teams in Cairo were working out transferring responsibility for health and welfare to the Palestinians by the end of the year.

The final stage will be the transfer of police powers in major West Bank population centres to the Palestinians, due to take place in 1996.

Mr. Freij said that tourism will be a major source of income for Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. "We want to be able to build a successful tourist industry," he said.

Mr. Barani said that a joint Israeli-Palestinian committee would meet next week in order to coordinate Bethlehem Christmas celebrations.

"We have to work together on promotion, marketing and infrastructure," he said. "We must do things in order to improve and to change the celebrations in Bethlehem."

Israel, Jordanian and Palestinian businessmen have already joined in planning joint regional ventures, and Israel signed a tourism agreement with Jordan last week.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Lebanon's Maronite cleric buried

BEIRUT (AP) — Maronite Catholic Cardinal Antonios Butros Khreis was buried Monday, eulogised as a man who sought to stifle the sectarian divisions that caused the 1975-90 civil war. Khreis, Lebanon's highest-ranking Maronite cleric, died Friday of natural causes aged 87. He was the only cleric with a Vatican-bestowed cardinal's rank among the one million-strong Maronite community, Lebanon's largest Christian sect. Khreis reigned as patriarch of Antioch and the entire Orient during the first 10 years of the war, in which the majority Muslims rebelled against the Maronite's dominance of power. About 150,000 people perished in the conflict, which ended with equal apportioning of power between Muslims and Christians under an Arab League-brokered accord.

Patriarch Nasrallah Steir, who succeeded Khreis as head of the Maronite Church in 1985, led the prayers and funeral procession Monday at Bikirri, the traditional hilltop seat of Maronite patriarchs north of Beirut. President Elias Hrawi, a Maronite, Prime Minister Rafik Hariri, a Sunni Muslim, and Parliament Speaker Nabih Berri, a Shiite Muslim, attended the funeral along with scores of cabinet-ministers.

S. Arabia to set up ties in East Europe

DUBAI (R) — Saudi Arabia is to establish formal diplomatic relations with Hungary, Poland and the Czech Republic and boost ties with other Eastern European countries, the Saudi Press Agency said on Monday. It said the council of ministers approved a Foreign Ministry proposal to form diplomatic ties with the three countries and appoint non-resident Saudi ambassadors. The council also formally recognised Slovenia, Croatia, Slovakia and Poland as "other Eastern European nations recognised by the kingdom to give them the opportunity to open embassies in Riyadh if they so desire," the agency reported.

UAE nationalises university management

ABU DHABI (AP) — The United Arab Emirates (UAE) on Monday appointed a local director for the state university as part of a campaign to nationalise its foreign-dominated workforce, the official news agency WAM reported. Hadeef Rashid Al Dahir, a Western-educated professor, was named chief administrator at the Emirates University, the first UAE national to take up that post since the institution was established in 1976. Four other UAE nationals were appointed his deputies in line with a decision issued by the university's president, Sheikh Nahayan Ben Mubarak Al Nahayan, who is also minister of higher education and research. "The university is receiving its first national director as it enters a new stage of development by reaping the fruits of its efforts to prepare national elements to occupy key posts," Sheikh Nahayan was quoted as saying.

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HIJAZ RAILWAY TRAIN

Dep. Amman ... \$80 p.m. every Monday
Arr. Damascus ... 5:00 p.m. every Monday
Arr. Jerusalem ... 7:30 p.m. every Sunday
Arr. Amman ... \$80 p.m. every Sunday

DEPARTURES
Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)

05:30 ... Karachi, Abu Dhabi (PK)
15:25 ... Paris, Damascus (AF)
15:26 ... Rome (RJ)
21:15 ... Aden (DM)
21:20 ... Beirut (ME)
21:20 ... Dubai (EK)
23:25 ... Amsterdam (KL)

MARKET PRICES
Upper price in fils per kg.

Apple 700/4000
Banana 600
Banana (Mukunmar) 600
Cabbage 120/600
Carrot 350/200
Cauliflower 220/100
Cucumber (large) 200/100
Cucumber (small) 370/200
Egplant 200/100
Figs 400/300<br

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Israel signed a joint
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Dr. Baram said his
ministry will provide every pos
support to the Palestinian
authority to help it develop
tourist sites and facilities.

Mr. Ismail handed a mes
age to Dr. Adwan from
Elias Freij, the Minister of
Tourism in the Palestinian
authority.

Also Tuesday, represen
tives of the Jordanian Travel
and Tour Agents Society and
the Higher Council for
Tourism Industry based in
Jerusalem, discussed industry
related issues with Ministry
of Tourism Assistant Minister
General Abdul Ishaq Abu
Ayash.

Dr. Abu Ayash said that
tourism constitutes the first

sector to be tackled in the
peace process and stressed
the importance of coordination
between the two sides in
counteracting the grave chal
lenges facing the region so as
not to turn the tourism mar
ket on both banks of the
Jordan River into a marginal
one.

He said peace, security and
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He said that a study is
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Dead Sea area, noting that
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Petra.

Society President Nicola
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Minister of Tourism and Antiquities Mohammed Adwan Tuesday meets in his office with Bajis Ismail, the executive director of the Higher Council for the Tourism Industry in the Palestinian self-rule authority (Petra photo)

Jordanian, Palestinian tourism officials meet to review industry cooperation

AMMAN (Petra) — Minister of Tourism and Antiquities Mohammed Adwan Tuesday discussed scopes of cooperation between the Palestinian self-rule authority and the Ministry of Tourism at a meeting with Bajis Ismail, the executive director of the Higher Council for the Tourism Industry in the self-rule authority.

Mr. Ismail handed a message to Dr. Adwan from Elias Freij, the Minister of Tourism in the Palestinian authority.

Also Tuesday, representatives of the Jordanian Travel and Tour Agents Society and the Higher Council for Tourism Industry based in Jerusalem, discussed industry related issues with Ministry of Tourism Assistant Minister General Abdul Ishaq Abu Ayash.

Dr. Abu Ayash said that tourism constitutes the first

joint marketing programmes.

The two sides, he added, should also work on improving services on their borders and study the possibility of participating in international fairs and reducing customs on the tourism industry.

He said peace, security and stability are basic factors in developing tourism, adding that well-studied marketing policies were also important, and he stressed the need for the Jordanians and Palestinians to work on them.

President of the council Hani Abu Dayyeh reviewed at the meeting obstacles fac

turing tourism in Palestine and stressed that tourism in the occupied territories is an integral part of Jordan's tourism.

He said that a study is currently being conducted to define locations which will host touristic projects in the Dead Sea area, noting that there is a three-year plan to develop the ancient city of Petra.

Society President Nicola Sabanech said that time was ripe for coordinating tourism activities between the sides, particularly in unifying laws and statutes and preparing

unique Jordanian-Indian relations in all fields.

Mr. Srinivasan praised His Majesty King Hussein's wisdom and courage, saying that India supports the signing of the Washington Declaration.

He described the declaration as the right step on the path of achieving a just, comprehensive and durable peace in the region.

The Indian official praised bilateral relations between his country and Jordan, saying that India is one of the largest importers of Jordanian phosphates and fertilizers.

Mr. Srinivasan presented Mr. Hassan with an invitation from his Indian counterpart to visit India.

Mr. Hassan praised India's support towards Arab causes and lauded the

Visiting envoy reiterates Russia's support for Jordan's peace moves

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — A senior Russian envoy has talked here on Tuesday and reiterated his country's support for Jordan's moves in the Middle East peace process and called for strengthened trade and economic relations between his country and the Kingdom.

Viktor Posovalyuk, a personal representative of President Boris Yeltsin, also described the Syrian and Lebanese tracks as an essential element of the peace process.

Mr. Posovalyuk, who arrived here from Syria on the third leg of a Middle East visit, made the comments in a meeting with Acting Prime Minister Thoouqan Hindawi, the Jordan News Agency, Petra, said.

"Russia welcomes the Washington Declaration (between Jordan and Israel) as a positive step and considers it as a major move towards ending the Arab-Israeli conflict," said Mr. Posovalyuk, head of the Middle East and Africa Department of the Russian Foreign Ministry.

Petra said Mr. Hindawi and Mr. Posovalyuk reviewed at the meeting obstacles facing tourism in Palestine and stressed that tourism in the occupied territories is an integral part of Jordan's tourism.

He said that a study is currently being conducted to define locations which will host touristic projects in the Dead Sea area, noting that there is a three-year plan to develop the ancient city of Petra.

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Acting Prime Minister Thoouqan Hindawi Tuesday meets with special Russian envoy Viktor Posovalyuk (second from right). The meeting was attended by Russian

Ambassador to Jordan Alexander Sultakov and Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Talal Al Hassan (Petra photo)

Syria to drop their boycott of the multilateral phase of the Middle East peace process.

Also expected to have been discussed during his talks in Damascus was Syria's military debt, worth \$10 billion, to Russia. Reports said Moscow and Damascus were looking at a formula to settle the debt and renew Russian military cooperation with Syria.

Minister, Indian envoy review peace process

AMMAN (Petra) — Minister of State Talal Al Hassan Tuesday reviewed the latest developments of the Middle East peace process with visiting Indian Foreign Secretary K. Srinivasan.

Mr. Hassan voiced Jordan's concern for establishing a just, comprehensive and durable peace in the region, saying that progress on the Jordanian-Israeli and Palestinian-Israeli tracks will give a boost to the negotiations on the other tracks.

The minister stressed that Jordan will not sign a peace treaty until progress is achieved on the other tracks and until all details and issues of interest to all parties involved are agreed upon.

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Foreign Ministry Secretary General Nayeef Al Haddad (second from right) Tuesday reviews bilateral relations with Indian Foreign Secretary K. Srinivasan

attended by Indian Ambassador to Jordan Arun Kumar Bodhiraj. In a departure statement, the Indian envoy described his talks with Jordanian officials as fruit and constructive.

University official wins first Boutros Ghali scholarship

AMMAN (I.T.) — Vice President for Academic Affairs at the University of Jordan Mohammad Maqusi has recently been selected as a winner of the first U.N. Secretary General Boutros Ghali Scholarship, according to a university statement Tuesday.

Dr. Maqusi was notified of his award in a letter from the chairman of the Foundation for the Support of the United Nations.

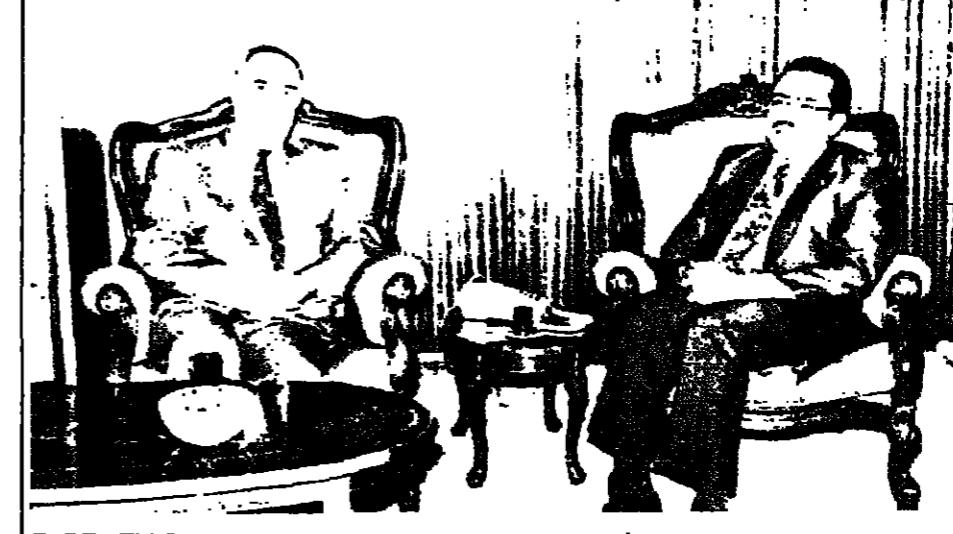
The foundation, which has headquarters in New York and Tokyo, was established in 1988 for the support of U.N. programmes and activities supporting community involvement and promotion of cultural projects.

In December 1993, the foundation established the Boutros Ghali Scholarship aimed at encouraging young world leadership for further involvement in U.N. activities and international cultural contacts.

The foundation has selected five winners of the



Mohammad Maqusi



FAREWELLS: Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs Abdul Raouf Rawabdeh Tuesday receives Lebanese Ambassador to Jordan Ahmed Ibrahim on the occasion of the end of his tour of duty (Petra photo)

HOME NEWS IN BRIEF

King congratulates Ukraine

AMMAN (Petra) — His Majesty King Hussein Tuesday sent a cable to Ukrainian President Leonid Kravchuk, congratulating him in his name and on behalf of the Jordanian people and government on Ukraine's national day. King Hussein wished Mr. Kravchuk continued good health and happiness and the Ukraine people further progress and prosperity.

Majali receives messages of appreciation

AMMAN (Petra) — Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali Tuesday received three messages from the foreign ministers of Mexico, Norway and Romania expressing appreciation of Jordan's role in the Middle East peace process. They expressed joy over the Jordanian-Israeli agreement signed in Washington last month ending the state of war between the two countries. They said the Washington Declaration constitutes a basic step on the way to achieving peace and stability in the Middle East and stressed their countries' support for the peace process.

Meeting focuses on factory locations

AMMAN (Petra) — Minister of Municipal and Rural Affairs and the Environment Tawfiq Kreishan Tuesday chaired a meeting of the factories committee charged with studying applications to establish factories and to ensure their appropriate location. Mr. Kreishan stressed the need for the committee to conduct comprehensive studies on the factories' locations, taking into consideration preserving the environment, agricultural lands and underground water. The committee was set up by the higher organisational council because of the lack of comprehensive organisation plans for the Kingdom's regions defining the uses of lands. The committee includes representatives of the ministries of Water and Irrigation, Health, Interior and Agriculture, as well as Municipal and Rural Affairs and the Environment, in addition to the departments of Land and Survey and Civil Defence.

AMMAN (Petra) — The Constituent Assembly of the Arabian Horse Club Monday elected a new administrative committee, headed by Her Royal Highness Princess Alia Bint Al Hussein. The new committee includes Mohammad Anwar Saleh, who was elected vice chairman, Salameh Hammad, Issa Rimouni, Anwar Al Shabani, Muayyad Dabbas, and Mohammad Fahmi Omar.

WHAT'S GOING ON

PLAY

★ Children's play entitled "Long Live the Dead Sea" at the Royal Cultural Centre on 18:00.

ART FESTIVAL

★ Festival of artistic works (including songs, plays, and an exhibition of various commodities) at the open theatre, the Royal Cultural Centre (5:00 p.m. - 11:00 p.m.).

EXHIBITIONS

★ Clothing and fashion industry exhibition at the International Exhibition Centre, University Road (Tel. 847113).

★ Exhibition of abstract art by Ghaleb Nahla and Mohammad Yass at Alia Art Gallery (Tel. 639350).

★ Children's school needs exhibition at the Amman International Auto Exhibition, Airport Road (12:00 noon - 11:00 p.m.) (Tel. 714211).

★ Painting on copper exhibition by Mohammad Jadi at the Phoenix Gallery for Art and Culture (Tel. 695291).

★ Exhibition of painting by several Jordanian artists entitled "The Fact Between Paintings and Viewers As Viewed By Artist" at the Royal Cultural Centre.

Mexican elections tainted by irregularities, observers say

MEXICO CITY (AP) — Mexican and foreign observers said vote fraud and irregularities, especially in rural areas, tainted Ernesto Zedillo's apparent presidential victory.

A coalition of some 380 non-partisan Mexican organizations monitoring the vote said there were "serious irregularities" in a substantial number of polling places.

"Mr. Zedillo won the election. However, we have elements to suspect how he won the election," said Sergio Aguayo, a leader of Civic Alliance, Mexico's largest electoral monitoring coalition.

Election workers permitted people to vote more than once in nine per cent of the polls, according alliance observers at 731 polls, Mr. Aguayo said. In 8 per cent of the polls, indelible ink designed to prevent multiple voting was in fact removable.

But a monitoring group from Emory University in the United States said the violations recorded by their 80 observers throughout Mexico were unlikely to have affected the overall result.

Mr. Zedillo's Institutional Revolutionary Party, or PRI, has ruled Mexico for the last 65 years.

Smaller U.S. monitoring missions focused on rural areas.

Katherine Kilbourn, of Grassroots International, reported "an incredible amount of fraud" in several towns in the southern state of Oaxaca.

"PRI people were standing there telling people how to vote, showing them how to mark the ballot, and some-

times marking it for them," she said.

U.S. lawyers from the Independent Global Exchange Organisation told reporters Monday of an atmosphere of fear prevailing in some rural areas.

"Many voters in Chiapas, for example, are still convinced that their vote can be monitored by the ruling party," said U.S. lawyer Peter Brown.

The PRI is widely believed to have used fraud throughout its years in power. Cuauhtemoc Cardenas, candidate for the Democratic Revolution Party, claims an unexplained election-night computer crash robbed him of victory in 1988.

Mexican President Carlos Salinas De Gortari, who was barred from running for another term, invited hundreds of foreign observers, including many U.S. businessmen and politicians, to demonstrate the fairness of this year's elections.

But in a Mexico City district, members of the Democratic Assembly for Effective Suffrage detained two men as they tried to leave the local Electoral Commission Office at about 1:30 a.m. local time.

"They were carrying a box from the polling place," assembly members Luis Amadeo said. "When we asked them where they were going with it, they started to run."

Mr. Amadeo said he and other assembly members caught up with the men and surrounded them. Police arrived, he said, but waited three hours before they arrested the men.

N. Korea on alert over anti-Kim protest — report

SEOUL (Agencies) — South Korea's domestic news agency Yonhap said Tuesday that leaflets calling for the overthrow of North Korea's new leader Kim Jong-II have been scattered around foreign missions in Pyongyang.

Yonhap quoted an unnamed Western diplomatic source in Seoul as saying North Korean authorities had been on special alert since the incident Friday night.

There was no independent confirmation and a South Korean government spokesman had no information about the report.

The source was quoted as saying the leaflets might have been distributed by those opposing Kim Jong-II's succession of power from his father Kim Il-Sung, who died on July 8.

The leaflets read "down with Kim Jong-II" and were scattered all over the diplomatic compound in the Northern capital, the source was quoted as saying.

He said it was possible those responsible for distributing them were from the privileged class because access to the compound was restricted.

Yonhap quoted the source as saying the incident might be related to North Korean radio commentary Sunday which hinted at opposition to the takeover by Kim Jong-II.

The commentary, broadcast by North Korea's domestic Central Radio and monitored by Radiopress in Tokyo, said the country's revolutionary work should not end with just one generation.

"Historical experience shows that if the succession issue involving take-over of great revolutionary works of the leader failed to be resolved correctly, it could result in damaging the party and revolution through acts of betrayal by ambitious people and conspirators," it said.

This, the radio added, "could also bring about a grave disastrous result."

Kim Jong-II, 52, was groomed for more than two decades as his father's successor and has been hailed as such by Pyongyang's official media.

But the younger Kim still has not been confirmed in the key positions the elder Kim held — state president, general secretary of the ruling Korean workers' Party and head of the party Military Commission.

Meanwhile, North Korea's stern refusal to open its undeclared nuclear sites to special inspections prompted open discord Tuesday among top South Korean officials.

Carlos victims protest 'smokescreen' Verge row

PARIS (R) — French officials and victims of attack blamed on Carlos the jackal said Tuesday a flurry of accusations by and against his lawyer were a smokescreen helping the captured guerrilla.

"This should not distract our compatriots from the essential... Murderers must be punished," he told RTL Radio.

RTL quoted then Prime Minister Pierre Mauroy as denying allegations that Mr. Mitterrand ordered his anti-terrorist unit to kill Mr. Verge and saying the lawyer would no longer be around Carlos if secret services had decided to kill him.

The allegations, denied by former spymasters, started a debate in the press on whether France, which abolished the death penalty in 1981, allowed its secret services to resort to murder.

Mr. Verge, who in 1982 defended Carlos' guerrilla girlfriend Magdalena Kopp, has said former Gendarmerie Captain Paul Barril told him he was spared because killing him would have been too conspicuous.

Blood at murder scene said to match Simpson's

LOS ANGELES (R) — Samples taken from a bloody trail leading away from the scene where O.J. Simpson's ex-wife and a friend were murdered match the DNA type of the football legend's blood, according to court papers filed Monday.

It was the first indication that DNA testing, which is much more accurate than other forms of blood matching, had linked Simpson's blood to the scene of the murders.

The results are preliminary, and prosecutors say more exhaustive tests are needed. DNA stands for deoxyribonucleic acid. It is the basic building block of genetic material. Simpson, a member of the U.S. Football Hall of Fame, has pleaded not guilty to murdering Nicole Brown Simpson, 35, and Ronald Goldman, 25, who were stabbed and slashed to death outside Nicole's Brentwood townhouse on the night of June 12.

Simpson's lawyers had claimed that blood samples were being subjected to unnecessary, duplicating tests that denied scientists hired by the defence access to them.

Deputy District Attorney Marcia Clark, in a motion to the court answering that claim, wrote that the samples were more likely to implicate Simpson than clear him.

"The blood drop trail... leading away from the murder scene at the rear of

the box contained ballots and other official documents. Mr. Amadeo said.

Opposition declares victory in Chiapas

Meanwhile, opposition leaders in a restive southern state say they will set up a rival local government in official results confirm a win for the ruling party.

Electon in Chiapas state, a poor region the government fought armed rebels earlier this year, coincided with Sunday's national vote for president and parliament.

Preliminary results in Chiapas gave a wide lead to Eduardo Robledo Rincon, the Institutional Revolutionary Party's candidate for governor. With 45 per cent of precincts counted, Mr. Robledo was leading with 49.1 per cent of the vote to 31.5 per cent for Amado Avendaño Figueroa of the leftist Democratic Revolution Party, or PRD.

But if the official results don't give him victory, Mr. Avendaño will call a popular assembly to replace the state congress, write a new state constitution and call new elections, his wife and party leaders said.

On Sunday, the PRD will launch demonstrations and other acts of civil disobedience through Dec. 8, the day the governor-elect takes office, Mr. Avendaño's wife Concepcion Villafuerte said.

Mr. Avendaño, 60, was unable to campaign after being hurt in a traffic crash last month, and Ms. Villafuerte took over for him.

Mr. Avendaño has aligned himself with the rebel Zapata

National Liberation Army and its demands for democracy, justice and improved social services, especially for the state's impoverished Indian peasants, party leaders said.

There was no immediate response from the armed rebels, who promised to withdraw into the mountains and stay out of the way on election day — though they have called for widespread civil disobedience to protest any electoral fraud.

Domingo Lopez Angel, federal deputy candidate for the PRD, told a rally in the plaza that the state elections were wracked by widespread fraud.

"We have to defend our vote yes or no?" he asked the crowd of more than 1,000 people.

"Yes" the crowd shouted back.

Although many Mexicans say Sunday's elections were fairer than past ballots, thousands of people in Chiapas were prevented from voting.

A nationwide shortage of absentee ballots was especially acute in Chiapas because many peasants were displaced by fighting between rebels and government troops that killed more than 145 people in January.

Some displaced peasants had to walk for miles (kilometres) to cast ballots for a new president, federal lawmakers and governor.

Mr. Avendaño was seriously injured July 26 in a traffic collision. Authorities said it was an accident. His family and supporters believe it was an attempt on his life.

Mr. Avendaño has aligned himself with the rebel Zapata



People crowd on the bank of the Meghna river far in Bangladesh's worst ferry disaster in as rescuers tow one of the bodies recovered so years (AFP photo)

Bangladesh rescuers find 90 bodies

DHAKA (Agencies) — Three days after a ferry capsized and sank in southern Bangladesh with about 410 people aboard, the bodies of 60 victims were found floating downstream Tuesdays.

Sixty people swam to safety or were rescued when the ferry — reportedly overcrowded with people and rice — sank Saturday in rough and deep rivers 500 metres from a ferry terminal.

A navy rescue ship finally arrived at the scene Tuesday to help divers search for the ferry at the confluence of the Meghna and Dakshin rivers near Chandpur Port.

The government also ordered an investigation of the accident.

The 60 bodies were found floating about 90 kilometres (55 miles) downstream from the scene of the ferry crash, police officer Mohammad Akbar Ali said.

Shipping Secretary Walid Islam told AFP an investigation into the Chandpur accident was underway, and a report is expected within 15 days.

Without directly admitting allegations that ferry laws were being flouted, he said the existing laws would reduce the number of mishaps, and would be more strictly enforced.

Typhoon kills 700 in Chinese province

BEIJING (R) — Typhoon Fred killed more than 700 people in China's eastern Zhejiang province and caused damage estimated at 10 billion yuan (\$1.16 billion), officials said Tuesday.

The typhoon pounded the coastal region over the weekend, collapsing thousands of houses and destroying river embankments.

A spokesman for the provincial Foreign Affairs Office said by telephone at least 700 people had died but there was as yet no final tally of deaths and property destruction.

"There is no way of calculating how many people are still missing," the spokesman said.

The official Xinhua News Agency said heavy rain

safety, the Bangladesh Times reported Tuesday.

In the other, a passenger boat hit a pontoon and broke apart in Paita River in south Bangladesh Monday killing eight people, the New Nation newspaper said Tuesday.

Shipping Secretary Walid Islam told AFP an investigation into the Chandpur accident was underway, and a report is expected within 15 days.

As the navy ship began searching for the ferry, two other boat accidents reportedly killed 23 people in other parts of Bangladesh, where many rivers are often rough during the monsoon.

In one, a launch carrying 300 people capsized near Maheshkhali Island in the Bay of Bengal Monday, and 15 died while swimming to

safety, the Bangladesh Times reported Tuesday.

The 60 bodies were found floating about 90 kilometres (55 miles) downstream from the scene of the ferry crash, police officer Mohammad Akbar Ali said.

Shipping Secretary Walid Islam told AFP an investigation into the Chandpur accident was underway, and a report is expected within 15 days.

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Albania recalls envoy from Athens

TIRANA (R) — Albania has recalled its Athens ambassador for consultations in a further deterioration of relations between the two Balkan neighbours, Albanian state radio said Tuesday.

Political analysts Tuesday said Mr. Wijetunga, whose support in his United National Party (UNP) has eroded, is also likely to lose November's presidential poll.

"Wijetunga enjoys immense powers but I don't think he will exercise them. He would be a lame duck president," said Jayadeva Uyangoda, political scientist at the University of Colombo.

Liberal Party President Chanka Amarathunga, also a political analyst, said Mr. Wijetunga knows he cannot win the presidential poll. "So why rock the boat now?"

India, with eye on Pakistan, moves on human rights

NEW DELHI (Agencies) — India, under fire for abusing human rights, has signalled willingness to scrap an anti-terrorist law critics say has been used to keep tens of thousands of innocent people languishing behind bars.

The government's readiness to consider repealing the 1985 Terrorist and Disruptive Activities Act (TADA) appears to be part of a campaign to improve its human rights image and restore support among alienated Muslims.

The move dovetails with a new diplomatic offensive in a feud with Pakistan over Kashmir, where some of the most brutal rights violations, including hundreds of "disappearances", are alleged to have occurred.

As part of the offensive, India is using a key suspect in 1992 bombings that rocked Bombay to turn the tables on Pakistan and paint it as a state supporting terrorism, officials said.

More than 65,000 people have been arrested under TADA since the sweeping law was enacted. Only a fraction have been charged and fewer than one person in 100 has been convicted.

The law was originally aimed at curbing separatism in Punjab. It has since been extended to all but three of India's 26 states.

It has provided the backbone for a crackdown following the 1992 blasts in Bombay that killed more than 260 people. Currently 193 people, mostly Muslims, are on trial in connection with the bombings but many more have been detained.

Internal Security Minister Rajesh Pilot flagged the government's readiness to review TADA. "If overzealous arrests and misuse of TADA continues by the state, the government will not hesitate to repeal the law," he said over the weekend.

The National Human Rights Commission has asked the Supreme Court to review a decision upholding the act and was set to contest with state officials Tuesday to assess the law.

Hundreds of thousands of Hindus link to the BJP

when police fired at thousands of Hindu activists after they tried to storm the seminary at Hubli town and unfurl a national flag there on the occasion of India's Independence Day on Aug. 15.

Two more people have since died in clashes in Hubli, 475 kilometres southeast of Bombay, and nearby Badravati.

The Hindu-nationalist Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP, Indian People's Party), which organised the Independence Day protests, has vowed it will not rest until it plants the Indian tricolour on the seminary ground.

"We will continue fighting there," BJP spokeswoman Sushma Swaraj said here. "There should not be an inch of land in India where anyone objects to unfurling of our national flag, that too on Independence Day."

The Hubli confrontation is worrying the government of Prime Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao, particularly because Karnataka state, where Hubli is located, is to go to the polls in November.

His Congress Party is worried about Muslim defections following the 1991 razing of a Muslim shrine in Ayodhya by Hindu nationalists. Mr. Rao's government was accused by many Muslims of turning a blind eye.

Meanwhile, a Muslim seminary in southern India is at the centre of a new Hindu-Muslim row that has revived bitter memories of the razed Babri Mosque.

Five people were killed

Thousands of frenzied Hindus link to the BJP tore down the 16th century mosque in the Indian town of Ayodhya following a prolonged campaign that it was built on the birthplace of Hindu God Rama.

The Hubli Municipal Corporation had leased the 1.5-acre (0.6 hectare) plot to a Muslim body in 1921 for a period of 99 years. The building of the seminary was challenged in court, and the Supreme Court is now to rule on the validity of a demolition order.

As Hindu-Muslim tensions gripped India in the 1990s over the Ayodhya row, the BJP first attempted a flag-hoisting on the Hubli land in 1992 and twice the next year. Each time, the Hindu crowds swelled.

BJP's Swaraj said Muslims opposed to the flag at the seminary were "fundamentalists who have little respect for our national symbols... But we are determined to go ahead."

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Chairman of the Board of Directors:
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Editor-in-Chief:
GEORGE S. HAWATMEH

Editorial and advertising offices:
Jordan Press Foundation,
University Road, P.O. Box 6710, Amman, Jordan.
Telephones: 667171/6, 670141-4
Telex: 21497 ALRAI JO
Facsimile: 696183

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Politics by proxy

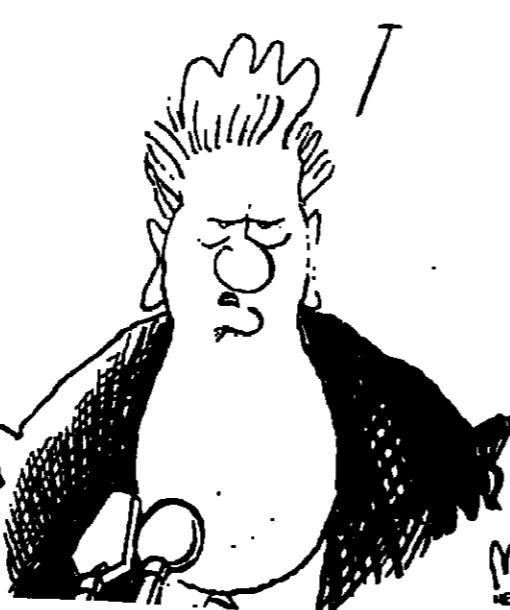
THE JUST-ended meeting of the foreign ministers of Turkey, Syria and Iran in Damascus took a brave decision to renew the agreement on the need to preserve Iraq's territorial integrity by rejecting "certain extra-regional efforts" aiming to strengthen and consolidate the Kurdish position in northern Iraq. But by passing such a resolution, the neighbours of Iraq are merely expressing concern about their own Kurdish populations and in turn their own territorial integrity in the face of growing international support for certain Kurdish rights in the region.

The recent Paris meeting held by rival Kurdish groups and representatives in Britain, France and the U.S. had a smell of attempted interference in the Kurdish question which Ankara, Tehran and Damascus saw as a prelude to the establishment of a Kurdish state in northern Iraq. The problem with the decision taken by Turkish Foreign Minister Mumtaz Soysal and Iranian Foreign Minister Ali Akbar Velayati and their Syrian counterpart Farouk Sharaa rests in the fact that it was adopted without Baghdad being present at the meeting. If there is a genuine concern about Iraq's territorial integrity, Iraqi authorities should have been the first to be present at the Damascus gathering. While professing rejection of all forms of interferences in Iraqi domestic affairs, the neighbours of that Arab state sought to do exactly the contrary by bypassing the very country that they wished to save from partition by the major powers. We think Iraq can no longer remain isolated from regional or extra-regional decision-taking processes. Ankara, Tehran and Damascus should have invited the government of Iraq to take its proper place at such an important meeting. It would not have been such a bad idea also if the PUK and KDP Kurdish factions in northern Iraq were also included in meetings which could determine their future. After all we are at the end of the 20th century and the policies of the past can no longer be viable.

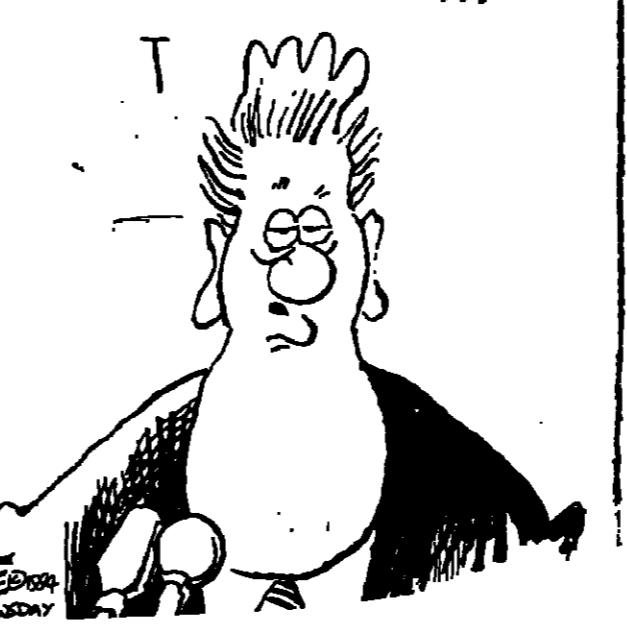
ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

AL RA'I Arabic daily Tuesday said that the Jordanian-Palestinian meetings which concluded in Amman Monday agreed on a mechanism to discuss issues of common interest that have become urgent for two reasons. The paper said in its editorial that the urgency of these issues resulted from the tangible unity between the Jordanian and Palestinian peoples which makes it difficult for any political leadership to ignore or dismantle. The second reason, said the paper, is due to the acceleration of the peace process and the important issues the two sides have to discuss in the process and to coordinate their stands on. The two sides have shown keenness to activate a joint mechanism to discuss developments in the peace process and showed a high level of responsibility when they stressed the need to coordinate their coverage of the process so as not to allow others to undermine bilateral relations, said the paper. It noted that that was the reason why the concluding statement of the meetings did not mention topics that the two sides differ over. The Israeli media, meanwhile, was keenly interested in highlighting Jordanian-Palestinian differences in an attempt to distract attention from the main issue in the region, which is ending the Israeli occupation of all Arab lands, namely the Jordanian and Palestinian lands, the paper said. It added that Israeli manoeuvres to aggravate Arab differences and plant secession among them was not even stopped by the peace process which gave Israel more "fuel and flammable material to add to the fire of secession it was trying to plant." Al Ra'i said that these manoeuvres only work on those who do not realise the deep feelings of pan-Arab belonging to both Jordan and Palestine. It said the main job of Jordan and Palestine will always remain ending the Israeli occupation.

I'M SICK OF ALL THIS CRITICISM!
MY ADMINISTRATION HAS PUT
MILLIONS OF PEOPLE TO WORK!



-GRANTED, MOST OF THEM ARE
SPECIAL PROSECUTORS!



Washington Watch

By Dr. James Zogby

Clinton's long, hot summer

U.S. PRESIDENT Bill Clinton is in the midst of a long and hot crisis-filled summer. He is facing a wide range of challenges, the most important of which threaten his chances for success on some of the most key domestic issues on which he based his presidency: health care, crime and welfare reform.

Throughout the summer, public approval of the president's performance has followed a downward trend, dropping more than 15 points. It is telling that even in an area where Mr. Clinton has had success: the economy, he is receiving little public recognition for his efforts.

The White House continually reminds the press and the public that in less than two years, Mr. Clinton has passed a major deficit reduction package, created significant new foreign trade opportunities for U.S. businesses, restored investor confidence in the economy, and overseen an economic resurgence which has created 4,000,000 new jobs, sustained reasonable economic growth while keeping inflation down. Yet despite these achievements, recent polls show that most Americans express disapproval of the president's handling of the economy, and a plurality even feel that Republicans would do a better job of handling the economy than the president's Democratic Party.

And even lower than the public's approval of Mr. Clinton's handling of the economy, foreign affairs, health care and crime is their overall approval of the president. The most recent CNN/USA Today polls shows Mr. Clinton's overall approval rating at a low 39 per cent.

Critics correctly point out the president's contribution to his decline in the polls: a succession of public scandals, disarray at the White House, and the administration's penchant for "waffling" on issues. But the single most important reason behind the president's slide in the polls is a growing cynicism about all government leaders — whether Democrat or Republican — and government in general.

While President Clinton has recently been receiving more favourable press coverage, the constant criticism he has endured during the past two years has taken its toll. So has the incessant partisan sniping that has become the norm in political discourse in Washington. An equally damaging but less noted phenomenon undermining the president is the tone of ridicule which political commentators, newscasters and popular comedians use when discussing our political leaders.

This very same pattern of criticism, partisan sniping and ridicule that weakened George Bush's presidency. Mr. Clinton is the new victim and every fault of his, whether or not it is related to his performance in office, is fair game; although he wouldn't be exempt even if he were perfect.

The end result of this type of discourse is deep public cynicism which suggests that the U.S. is on a downwards slide, that little can be done to correct "the mess in Washington," and that "those politicians in Washington" are not capable of doing the job in any case. Ironically, the need to restore hope to a cynical electorate was one of the major themes of Mr. Clinton's campaign. So it is especially hurtful for the president to see his leadership paralysed by his inability to combat public negativity.

This is more than a morale problem for the White House, however; it is a practical political problem as well. As public cynicism and disrespect for government grows, so does Mr. Clinton's ability to lead and influence legislators to support his programmes.

The president has become so politically weak that his very

identification with his own programmes has become a liability. For example, recent polls show that a clear majority of Americans support the type of health care reform that the president has called for. The public overwhelmingly believes that there should be universal health care coverage for all Americans and that employers should pay to cover their employees — two central features of the president's programme. But when asked if they support the Clinton health care plan, a majority says "no."

The president's political weakness not only poses problems for more than just his legislative agenda, but it has political ramifications as well. Several Democratic candidates in this year's Congressional elections have already advised the White House to "stay away" from their campaigns. This prompted one Democratic Party official to state: "We're aware that it is not in the best interests of some of our candidates to associate with us (the Clinton administration) and we understand this ... if you want us to stay away, we'll stay away."

While these comments were, of course, quickly repudiated by the White House, they did reflect a widespread attitude among Democratic leaders and candidates who have come to fear that too close an identification with President Clinton will hurt their electoral chances in November.

The Republicans' strategy, as indicated by their behaviour during the recent voting on the crime bill and the debate over health care in the Senate, is clear: Obstruct the president's efforts to pass any legislation this fall.

The Republicans assume that if they can deny the president any legislative victories, they will even further erode his leadership, which they hope will improve their chances of winning control of Congress in the 1994 elections. In this effort they used stalling tactics and threats against any members of their party who break ranks to support the president.

But the Republicans' success in temporarily derailing the president's crime bill last week shocked the White House into action. The president has taken some steps to shore up his position, especially in preparation for this fall's Congressional elections. In his appeal to Democrats to support his position on the legislation, the president correctly observed that he needed Democratic votes "to save my presidency."

Implicit in this appeal was a recognition that if the president loses the vote on the crime bill and is further weakened, the Democrats' chances to win their elections this fall will decrease.

In further effort to restore confidence, the president is engaged in a restructuring of the White House administration team. In this effort he has called on three respected Democratic party leaders: Leon Panetta (who moved from the position of director of the office of management and budget to become White House chief of staff), Tony Coelho (a former House majority whip who was assigned to the Democratic National Committee to assist in planning strategy for the 1994 elections), and Judge Abner Mikva (who will take over as White House Legal Counsel).

It is not clear how immediately these changes in operations will begin to have an effect on White House performance. Nor is it clear that they will succeed soon enough to secure passage of the crime bill and health care reform before the November elections.

What is clear is that the president is emerging from his long, hot summer with a "wake-up call" and a determination to fight to save his embattled presidency.

India, U.S. burying long-time antagonisms

By Nelson Graves
Reuter

NEW DELHI — When the United States ordered a quarter of a million Indian skirts be taken off store shelves this month on the grounds that they could catch fire, American diplomats expected a strong reaction in New Delhi.

But an unruffled Indian government refused to shout foul. Instead it told exporters to win back the market by offering scientific proof the skirts were not excessively flammable.

"We had expected the usual grumblings about unfair trade barriers," a U.S. diplomat said. "But they didn't really come."

Forty-seven years after India won independence, New Delhi and Washington are burying deep-seated antagonisms and forging a new relationship.

New Delhi's level-headed reflex in the skirts episode demonstrated the pragmatism that now surrounds Indo-U.S. relations, diplomats and foreign policy analysts say.

The mistrust, prejudices and ideological labels that kept Washington and New Delhi at arm's length throughout the cold war are giving way to a cautious willingness to strengthen

"There is a warning of the relationship," said B.G. Verghese of the Centre for Policy Research in New Delhi.

The shift is closely related to the changed international landscape. During the cold war Washington considered India to be Moscow's client state. But that thorn has been removed with the disintegration of the Soviet Union.

Now that Soviet troops are out of Afghanistan and tensions have cooled in the Gulf, India's Western neighbour, Pakistan, no longer has strategic primacy for Washington, which for many years counted Islamabad with sophisticated weaponry.

Still, until recently

"Strategic issues in 1992-93 were a huge strain on Indo-U.S. relations," said Bhabani Sen Gupta, executive director of the Centre for Research on International Change.

"There was a very strong U.S. emphasis on human rights, the Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty (NPT) and missiles."

Then India opened up the disputed Kashmir region to foreigners and diplomats, set up a national human rights commission and, in early 1993, launched bilateral talks with Pakistan. Kashmir, however, still

remains largely closed to international human rights groups.

Mr. Gupta said India appears to have assured Washington that it is in no rush to develop its missile-launching capability, and the emphasis in non-proliferation circles has shifted to seeking a nuclear-safe, as opposed to a nuclear-free, world.

As Islamic fundamentalism makes inroads in Algeria, Malaysia and Turkey, Washington looks to India — with the world's second largest Muslim population behind Indonesia — as a bulwark.

But the deciding factor, according to Mr. Gupta, was India's far-reaching economic reform programme, launched in 1991, which has stoked U.S. hopes of cashing in on business opportunities.

India's economic potential looms ever larger as some other Asian markets become saturated. India is also a hedge against the possibility of political unrest in China, Mr. Verghese said.

"India needs U.S. technology and the U.S. is interested in the Indian market and its possible stabilising role," he said.

The recent appointment of U.S. Ambassador Frank Wisner to a post that had long remained vacant soothed New Delhi's pride.

Mr. Wisner quickly won plaudits from New Delhi when he said there was little hope Washington would deliver 38 F-16 warplanes that Pakistan had ordered because of opposition in Congress.

The Indian government then extended a valuable payment guarantee to U.S. giant Enron Corp., which is building a \$3 billion gas power plant in western India.

Last week Prime Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao announced a new plan to pay Indian parents to pull up to two million children out of hazardous jobs and put them in school.

Charity groups said it was a clear response to a U.S.-led campaign to curb child labour in developing countries.

A U.S. diplomat said Washington had decided to tone down its criticism of India's human rights record and quietly prod India and Pakistan to settle their ongoing dispute over Kashmir.

A parade of U.S. officials including Defence Secretary William Perry are expected in India in early 1995.

"Instead of flying at each other's throats, India and the U.S. are willing to sit down and talk things out," Mr. Verghese said. "They can agree to disagree without being disagreeable."

French leave Rwanda — could they have done more?

By John Follain
Reuter

PARIS — As the last French soldiers in Rwanda packed their bags on Sunday, Paris defiantly applauded their two-month humanitarian mission in the face of critics who had questioned its motives.

French officials say they are satisfied with the achievements of Operation Turquoise and if the military mission did not stabilise the region that had not been its aim.

No French official is ready to rule out a new catastrophe — a new exodus of refugees or more inter-tribal violence.

A front-page cartoon in Le Monde summed up France's failure to ensure violence does not flare up again as the new government of the Rwanda Patriotic Front (RPF) gradually takes control.

An unarmed French soldier boarding a jet turns to wag a finger at an RPF colleague, who has a gun on his shoulder. "We're agreed — no more genocide," the Frenchman admonishes.

With its U.N. mandate expiring on Sunday, Paris says it has pulled off a delicate operation and silenced critics at home and abroad who two months ago cast doubt on its motives.

"We told the U.N. all we know about the violence," the military source said. "We arrested people caught red-handed committing offences, but it definitely wasn't up to us to hunt for murderers and arrest them."

According to Paris, the ball is now in the court of the new Kagame government, which must demonstrate it can re-assure its people and avert another refugee exodus.

The enduring hostility of the new Kagame rulers, with their repeated calls for French soldiers to pull out, played into the hands of French Prime Minister Edouard Balladur who was keen for the troops to pull out on time.

The U.N. force inherits a challenging task. French officials say there are 2.5 million residents and refugees in the "safe zone" against 1.9 million in the rest of Rwanda.

In the strategic power game, Operation Turquoise has shown France stands almost alone in the West as a country with the means and the will to intervene militarily in Africa.

Beyond the lives they undoubtedly saved, the French troops will have served to flesh out Mr. Balladur's ambition, which he repeated this week, for France not to be seen only as a "medium-sized power."

French Foreign Minister Alain Juppe has acknowledged

LETTER

A congenial forum?

To the Editor:

THE EXCELLENT idea of the "science week" held earlier this month in Amman was marred by a point of protocol.

Large boards were placed in the auditorium marked "their excellencies the ministers" and "distinguished personalities" to indicate seating intended for those who did not belong into the above categories.

Islamic teaching and Arabic tradition are profuse with statements against any form of class distinction or privilege. "The public's master is their servant" is one of the more celebrated statements. "Civil servant" and not "civil master" is the usual designation of government officials in more sophisticated set-ups. But it seems that the habits surviving from the "centuries of darkness" carry greater weight in our society than those teachings and traditions.

A whole is made up of component parts and the only one of the important components. The above procedure contributes to a pompous and unpleasant atmosphere.

Some of the readers of this letter will have experienced the environment in which conferences of similar nature are held in lands much more advanced in the field. It is usually free seating with highly distinguished researchers sitting next to students in all manner of casual dress including jeans and shorts! In fact that attitude contributes to a great atmosphere of learning as the implicit message is that the focus is on the quality of subject matter and nothing else.

Honour is then bestowed on those whose work has the highest quality and not through overbearing decree.

Dr. Omar Mangi
Amman.

Features

Jordan made specific proposals

(Continued from page 1)

see their meetings with each other as one aimed at addressing the mapping of a future that will reflect on the two sides equally.

"We told them we are not negotiating with them, we are only trying to do the things that have to be done," one official said.

But the more important result of the meetings, held after months of uneasy relations, was in laying the grounds and hopefully allaying the fears that have so far hindered Palestinian coordination with Jordan.

The fact that the members of the cabinet-level Palestinian delegation "were more politicians than economists" is because they appeared to be "assessing the political atmosphere ahead of a higher meeting between His Majesty King Hussein and President Yasser Arafat," one Jordanian official said.

The Palestinian delegation apparently had told the Jordanian side that they wanted final agreements to

be signed by Mr. Arafat himself. Because of this message, Jordanian officials believe a summit between the Jordanian and Palestinian leaders will only come after the joint committee paves the road for a successful visit, probably after the next meeting in September.

The Jordanian side believes that it might have been successful at laying to rest what they say are "unsubstantiated fears" towards Jordanian intentions whether over the issue of Jerusalem or on trade and banks.

"The overall feeling we got, as Jordanian delegates to the meeting, is that there is a lot Jordan can do to facilitate the task of the Palestinian self-rule authority," the senior official said.

"Also we feel that any difficulties they may have in handling their affairs, whether internally or with international donors, are problems that affect us as well and with which we have had experience, as a state, which we could impart on them," he said.

Negotiations have ups downs

(Continued from page 1)

"Furthermore, we should not be discussing those issues in the street. We should sit together and talk about them and try to find solutions to differences," he said.

He said these differences in views "do not mean that there is a conflict" with the Palestinians, and affirmed that every point of difference was discussed at the meetings which concluded Monday in Amman.

Dr. Majali, who was seen off at the airport by Deputy Prime Minister Thounan Al Hindawi, several Cabinet members, Jordanian Ambassador in Washington Fayez Tarawneh and several offi-

cials, will deliver several lectures on behalf of His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan on the Middle East peace process and Jordan's role in it.

He said it was imperative to preserve and highlight Jordan's good image in Arab and international intellectual arenas.

The premier will deliver lectures at the Rand Foundation and at the Los Angeles World Affairs Council.

The premier, in his comments at Petra, described Jordanian-American relations as good, pointing to Washington's writing off of part of Jordan's debts and asking other countries to reduce these debts.

Activists step up campaign

(Continued from page 1)

pan-Arab mobilisation to achieve the goals of the struggle and national liberation stage; and articles 20-26 which consider the Balfour Declaration and the (British) mandate pact null and consider Zionism as an imperial political, racist, expansionist movement."

"Therefore we have to affirm that if Mr. Yasser Arafat succeeds in illegally introducing amendments that he has committed himself to, only few procedural articles will remain out of the charter's 33 articles."

It said Mr. Arafat had no authority to represent the Palestinian people or act on behalf of the PLO or any PLO institutions. The statement noted that Mr. Arafat has not been able to convene a meeting of the PLO Executive Committee itself because of lack of quorum.

Among the signatories were:

- Ibrahim Baker, lawyer and former member of the PNC and deputy chairman of the Executive Committee;
- Ahmad Sedki Al Dajani, PNC member and former member of the Executive Committee;
- Edward Said, professor at Columbia University;
- Asaad Bayoud Al Tamimi, PNC member;
- Asma Khader, lawyer;
- Amin Qubba'a, researcher.

Bassam Al Shakaas, elected mayor of Nablus;

— Bahjat Abu Gharbiya, PNC member and former executive committee member;

— Tayseer Khaled, PNC and Executive Committee member;

— Jamil Marqaq, PNC member;

— Jawad Younis, lawyer;

— George Habash, secretary general of the PFLP;

— Haidar Abdul Shafi, head of the Palestinian negotiating team in Madrid and former deputy speaker of the PNC;

— Khaled Al Fahoum, former PNC speaker;

— Riyad Al Maliki, professor at Bir Zeit University;

— Riad Mansour, deputy ambassador to the U.N.;

— Saji Salameh, PNC member;

— Samiha Khalil, chairwoman of the In'ash Al Usra Society;

— Shafiq Al Hout, PNC and Executive Committee member;

— Salah Salah, PNC member and former member of the Executive Committee;

— Abbas Zaki, member of the PNC and the Fatah Central Committee;

— Abdu Jabbar Abu Gharbiya, member of the administrative committee of the Arab Human Rights Organization;

— Abdul Samih, PNC member;

— Abdul Rahim Mulawwi,



Sifting through "second hand" clothing at a downtown Amman clothes stall (File photo)

By Adrian D'Ambra

AROUND THE suburbs of Australian cities, near railway stations and beside supermarket carparks, stand the large metal collection bins of the Salvation Army and the Brotherhood of St. Laurence. They are like giant posting boxes with shutters big enough for people to push their bags of unwanted clothing through.

The brotherhood bins — a generic name covering all agencies — achieved a sad infamy some years ago when it was realised that they were being used by homeless street kids as a place to crash for the night. These were just some of the people the welfare agencies were wanting to help, but not in this way. The full horror of this tragic irony was brought to public attention with the death by incineration of a runaway child in one of the bins.

However, the unfortunate history of the used clothing collection receptacles did not pass into the province of urban mythology and they are still being used today. Australians are ram-

pantly consumeristic — we don't save, we spend — but alongside this conspicuous consumption, we are also charitable. People think nothing of bundling up their unwanted family clothing, their no longer fashionable or out of season gear, and depositing it in one of the collection bins. The era of the hand-me-downs has passed but we have replaced it with something we consider to be equally practical and helpful.

I first began to wonder what happened to all the clothing donated to the welfare agencies since I've been living in a developing country where imported clothing is so expensive I refuse to buy it and the locally made stuff is either made or uninspiring.

As an employed expatriate I can, of course, replenish supplies during annual leave. However, apart from underwear and socks, everything I've bought in Jordan has been second hand.

For many local people on lower to middle class incomes the well stocked shops of imported second hand clothing are their only

means of keeping themselves and their families reasonably dressed.

Before I go any further, I should point out something. Like most Australians I have a fairly naive view of what happens to the clothes and donated to the welfare agencies. I've always assumed that they are distributed amongst need by sale at a so-called pre-loved or re-cycled clothing store.

The wholesaler then cleans and bundles up the remaining clothes into bails again, selling them to distributors at approximately a one hundred percent mark up on the original bail price.

From my own experience in Jordan and Syria, I can assure you that many of the clothes following a similar route through European countries do end up in the Third World.

What does the wholesaler do? He employs several sorters at his warehouse.

They select the best quality, top table items which are then bought in bulk by the second hand boutiques around town which sell them singly, off the rack to you. Don't be surprised if you see the clothes and accessories you thought were going to be distributed amongst the needy for sale at a so-called pre-loved or re-cycled clothing store.

The wholesaler then cleans and bundles up the remaining clothes into bails again, selling them to distributors at approximately a one hundred percent mark up on the original bail price.

From my own experience in Jordan and Syria, I can assure you that many of the clothes following a similar route through European countries do end up in the Third World.

In the back rooms you can often see the bails, about a metre-and-a-half high, wide and deep. There will also be a non-stop ironing board and tailor's stool.

Everything is pressed and repaired on the premises and the only way to buy is

retailers. I know because I'm wearing some of them.

One of the fastest growing enterprises in downtown Amman is the retailing of imported second hand clothing which — and I've only just recently realised this — was originally donated to charity. There are certain areas — French Loaf and Italian Hospital Streets are the largest and busiest — where every shop for block after block has been given over to this cut-throat enterprise.

Some shops specialise in shoes hanging by the hundreds of pairs from the ceiling, others in children's, women's or men's clothing. Other shops specialise in winter weights and overcoats — people who have never lived in the Middle East have no idea how cold it gets in winter.

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Nigeria's crisis pits businessmen against generals

By James Jukwey
Reuter

LAGOS — Nigeria's crisis pitting a southern multi-millionaire businessman against entrenched northern generals threatens to ignite a wider ethnic conflict.

Mr. Abiola, 56, has transformed his image from that of a lackey of Western imperialism to a champion of democracy.

The annulment of the June 12, 1993, election made him a cause celebre of a pro-democracy movement opposed to the army's stop-start and manipulated return to a civil rule programme.

Militant oil unions demanding Mr. Abiola's release and installation as president have been on strike since July 4 and brought Nigeria's oil-dependent economy to its knees.

Abacha's greatest advantage is that people underestimate him. They think he is a pushover, a man who is easily swayed.

Gen. Abacha is Nigeria's eighth military ruler and is as uncompromising as he is inscrutable.

He seized power last November during the anarchy unleashed by the annulment of last year's presidential election which Mr. Abiola — one of the few candidates allowed by the generals to run — is widely believed to have won.

The Palestinian police chief General Nasr Yousef said on Tuesday the PLO had put off issuing orders to arrest Hamas militants despite calls to end violence.

He said the PLO had its "reasons which are political and its own vision of things."

known to be friends. Mr. Abiola owed his candidacy to the then military President Ibrahim Babangida who saw Mr. Abiola as an acceptable opposition figure unlikely to beat the generals' preferred northern candidate.

Mr. Abiola, 56, has transformed his image from that of a lackey of Western imperialism to a champion of democracy.

The annulment of the June 12, 1993, election made him a cause celebre of a pro-democracy movement opposed to the army's stop-start and manipulated return to a civil rule programme.

Mr. Abiola, an accountant who owns a domestic airline and newspaper group, rose from extremely poor beginnings to become a philanthropic patron of communities and individuals throughout Africa and its diaspora, earning widespread popularity.

Aides say his panacea for Nigeria's ailing economy is the introduction of Singapore-style paternalistic authoritarianism with an emphasis on big business.

Mr. Abiola's main constituency is the Yoruba-speaking southwest of Nigeria whose people are anxious to see northern political dominance ended.

Nigeria has been governed by soldiers for 24 out of its 34 years of independence.

Despite pressure from pro-democracy groups and Mr. Abiola's supporters for an immediate end to military rule, Gen. Abacha has said democracy will be restored only through the constitutional conference he in-

augurated in June.

Gen. Abiola owed his candidacy to the then military President Ibrahim Babangida who saw Mr. Abiola as an acceptable opposition figure unlikely to beat the generals' preferred northern candidate.

Carlos seen expendable in post-cold war world

By Jim Wolf
Reuter

WASHINGTON — By the end of his long and bloody career, Carlos had, like so many of his victims, become expendable.

Experts inside and outside the U.S. government said the notorious guerrilla captured in Sudan and extradited to France Monday was doomed by post-cold war trends that brought an end to his sponsorship by such pariah states as Iran and Libya that the United States claims support terrorist.

They said Carlos, who eluded security forces for 20 years, outlived his usefulness to East European and Middle Eastern intelligence services that allegedly sheltered him during the cold war.

Up to 100 people have been killed in riots since Mr. Abiola was arrested in June after proclaiming himself president on the anniversary of the annulled election.

Gen. Abacha attended the former Mons Officer Cadet College in England in 1964 and rose swiftly through the ranks to colonel in 1975. He was promoted to brigadier in 1980.

He is a result, he lost the organisation and safe haven network that helped him carry out spectacular attacks beginning in the mid-1970s, including the 1975 kidnapping of 11 oil ministers attending an OPEC meeting in Vienna.

"He's someone from a bygone era. He's an historical curiosity," said Vincent Cannistraro, head of Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) counterterrorism operations between 1988 and 1990.

Many of the sacked oil union leaders come from the south where Nigeria's oil is pumped. But because northerners dominate government much of the proceeds is siphoned off for projects in other areas, leaving the oil-producing south neglected.

Mr. Cannistraro said Syria expelled Carlos months ago because of pressure from France, where a court sentenced him in his absence to life imprisonment for killing two French citizens in 1975.

"There was no reason for the Sudanese not to

cooperate. And there was every reason for them to cooperate, to show they were being helpful in the fight against terrorism," Mr. Cannistraro said in a telephone interview. "Carlos had become a throwaway."

Larry Johnson, a former State Department official who now runs an international security consulting firm, said: "The bottom line is, his state sponsorship ran out."

A U.S. intelligence official said the CIA had tracked Carlos across four continents for two decades.

The CIA's cooperation with governments in Middle East and elsewhere helped close the noose, steadily denying Carlos safe havens," he said. "The CIA's tracking his movements was a key contribution to the French success in Sudan."

Yossef Bodansky, director of the House of Representatives Republican Task Force on Terrorism and Unconventional Warfare, said he doubted Carlos's capture spelled an end to Sudan's alleged support of militant groups seeking to abort the Arab-Israeli peace process and oust secular governments in Algeria and Egypt.

Kenneth Katzman, an expert on militant Islam at the congressional research service, said Carlos had become "expendable," giving Sudan an easy way "to deflect attention from its involvement with Islamic militants."

The Venezuelan-born Carlos, whose real name is Illich Ramirez Sanchez, was a key figure in guerrilla movements from Western Europe to the Middle East to Japan. Mr. Pasqua said he had been responsible for the deaths of 83 people worldwide over the past 20 years, including at least 15 French nationals.

Libya, Syria, North Korea and Cuba. As an officially listed terrorist pariah state, Sudan has been barred from trading with the United States or getting aid.

According to an annual State Department report titled "Patterns of Global Terrorism," Sudan has been providing sanctuary to such radical groups as Hezbollah, Hamas and the Palestinian Islamic Jihad.

"Sudan served as a convenient transit point, meeting site and safe haven for Iranian-backed extremist groups," the August 1993 report claimed. It said that five of the 15 suspects arrested last year after the Feb. 26 bombing of New York's World Trade Centre were Sudanese citizens.

State spokesman Michael McCurry said Sudan's handing over of Carlos was welcome but "in and of itself is not sufficient action to cause us to rescind their listing."

In Khartoum, Sudanese Interior Minister Al Tayeb Ibrahim Mohammad Khair said Carlos entered the country using a false passport and was seized by security agents at a rented house as he plotted attacks against foreign interests in Sudan. He was extradited to France Monday.

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Last August, the U.S. State

U.N. chief sees global 'social crisis', cites poverty, unemployment and upheaval

UNITED NATIONS (AP) — Secretary-General Boutros-Ghali Monday said the world faces a global "social crisis", caused by poverty, unemployment, upheaval and social disintegration.

He called on the international community to make a commitment to social development, cutting military budgets first, not social and environmental spending.

The U.N. chief called on nations attending the world summit for social development next March in Copenhagen, Denmark, to pledge to reduce by half or more the proportion of people living in absolute poverty, to create jobs and to reduce disparities among income groups, sexes, ethnic groups, regions and nations.

The social summit is the

latest of a series of ambitious international conferences: The children's summit several years ago, the earth summit in 1992, the international conference on population and development to be held next month in Cairo, Egypt and the fourth world conference on women to be held in September 1994 in Beijing.

Dr. Boutros-Ghali addressed the opening of the summit's second preparatory conference at U.N. headquarters. The conference, ending Sept. 2, will formulate a declaration and plan of action to be adopted in Copenhagen. Another preparatory meeting will be held in January to complete the texts to be adopted by heads of state at the summit.

"The global social crisis threatens many states as much as any foreign army,"

Dr. Boutros-Ghali told representatives of the 184 U.N. members as well as representatives of non-governmental organisations and others attending.

For 50 years, he said, the United Nations has avoided another world war. "But without investment in social development, the foundations of peace will not be secured."

"It is time to balance the old commitment to territorial security with a new commitment to human security. To shift from providing security through arms to ensuring extreme poverty, which afflicts 1.3 billion people worldwide."

Fresh efforts are required to revive development in the least developed countries, particularly in sub-Saharan Africa, Dr. Boutros-Ghali said.

Inadequate financing for

In Africa, he said, major domestic reforms are needed. He called on the international community to enter into development compacts with individual countries in Africa and elsewhere.

The summit, he said, "presents a major opportunity to close the traditional North-South divide and to open a new chapter in international development cooperation for the post-cold war era."

Among many proposals, the draft summit document calls for each nation to set a timetable for eliminating extreme poverty, which afflicts 1.3 billion people worldwide.

Issues of resources and technology sharing are likely to divide developed and lesser developed nations, as they do in many international forums.

He said that one of the many signs of the social crisis is the death every day of 35,000 children worldwide and said most of the deaths could be prevented with better social services.

Ukraine easing exchange curbs but may be slow

KIEV (R) — Ukraine's new administration announced plans Tuesday to reopen the Kiev currency exchange and ease state control over markets, but economists called the moves half-hearted.

A decree signed by President Leonid Kuchma aims to bring the overvalued official foreign-exchange rate of Ukraine's currency, the karbovanets, gradually in line with the much lower market rate by the end of the year.

It also ordered the Ukrainian Interbank Currency Exchange to resume trading on Oct. 1. The bourse was closed last November after

the government accused it of fueling inflation.

But economists said the decree fell short of expectations and they criticised its vague wording and long deadlines.

"I can't imagine that the (International Monetary Fund) and other institutions will be pleased with this. It's quite different from what Kuchma and his advisers had led us to believe," said one Western diplomat.

"This is a recipe for further drift. They've essentially maintained the same system, perhaps knocking off some of the rough edges," he added.

Mr. Kuchma's administration is under pressure to right the economy to receive \$4 billion in aid promised by Western economic institutions provided Ukraine starts serious reforms. An IMF mission is in Kiev to work on an economic stabilisation programme with the government.

But a conservative parliament and government are pushing for more centralised control of the economy.

"This is not a simple issue and the decree is a compromise. I am certain we will be criticised by both the left and the right," Mr. Kuchma's top

economic adviser Anatoly Halytsky told a news briefing.

"There were serious differences on this. We will have to work with the parliament on this," he said.

Mr. Halytsky said the government hoped the reopening of the exchange would open the door to a Western-backed currency stabilisation fund. The sooner such a fund was set up, he said, the sooner Ukraine would have real market exchange rates.

Ukraine has two exchange rates — an official rate used

for the sale of 50 per cent of companies' hard-currency earnings, and a second rate set at weekly central bank auctions.

Under the terms of the decree, the official rate will be based on a series of factors, including inflation, monetary creation and the trade balance. There is no direct link to the market rate.

Economists have long criticised the lack of a free exchange rate and the compulsory sale of export earnings, saying they discouraged exporters and led to widespread capital flight and government corruption.

India's navy chief calls for expansion of fleet

BOMBAY (R) — India's naval chief has called for a bigger budget to expand the country's extensive blue water fleet in order to protect trade along India's sea lanes as it continues to open up its economy after decades of protectionism.

"With the opening up of our economy, we are once again becoming a major trading nation over the seas," said Admiral V.S. Shekhar.

"We therefore require a sufficiently strong navy to safeguard India's maritime interests," Admiral Shekhar said.

The navy's current budget of 30 billion rupees (\$937 million), which is 13 per cent of India's total defence budget, was inadequate, Admiral Shekhar said.

"With a 15 per cent defence budget allocation for the navy, all I can possibly do is arrest the downside," he

said. "What I require is not just to arrest the downside, but a significant reversal, for which 13 to 20 per cent of the total defence budget is essential."

Admiral Shekhar said that the Indian navy wants to build its own ships to standardise on equipment and spares and reduce expenses on training, all of which are much higher now because of the variety of ships in the fleet.

"We propose to go for indigenous general purpose frigates," he said, adding that government approval for a bigger budget would result in the fleet expanding substantially in about 10 years.

Analysts believe India's tightening of its purse strings for defence in recent years has been influenced by current views on regional security and the economic reforms launched in mid-1991.

The Indian Ocean, focus of

to build in the 1980s, is now a relatively low area of strategic concern after the end of the cold war and following New Delhi's rapprochement with Beijing, the analysts say.

India, ally of the Soviet Union in the cold war and a rival of China after their border war in 1962, had alarmed countries as far away as Australia and southeast Asia as its navy's blue water reach began to grow.

The concerns reached a peak when India acquired or leased a nuclear-powered submarine from the Soviet Union in 1989.

Asked if the navy's submarine design group had drawn up plans for a locally made nuclear-powered submarine, Admiral Shekhar said that only conventionally powered submarines were being sought at present.

Admiral Shekhar also rejected the option of purchasing aircraft carriers to replace the ageing Vikrant.

He ruled out any quick-fix solutions to the economic challenges of post-apartheid South Africa, including widespread unemployment in which 29 per cent of the labour force was unable to find paid work.

"It is an unequivocal fact ... that massive unemployment will remain a feature for some time to come as a legacy of the dismal performance of the South African economy over the past decade," he told the bank's annual meeting.

The economy started to recover in 1993 after four years of recession, which

included three in a row of economic shrinkage.

Mr. Stals said however, that growth faltered early this year amid uncertainties ahead of the country's first all-race elections in April.

"The recovery must still be regarded as fragile," he said. "It could easily lose its momentum again, particularly if the current friction between various trade unions and employers is not resolved soon."

He spoke against the background of a wave of strikes, accompanied by annual wage negotiations, aimed at securing the "better life for all" promised by President Nelson Mandela in his election campaign.

Production disruptions had already persuaded Finance Minister Derek Keys to drop his sights from 3.0-4.0 per cent growth for 1994, although he said recently he still expected more than 2.5 per cent following 1.2 per cent last year.

Mr. Stals urged the country to face its economic challenges in the same spirit in which it had approached "almost insurmountable"

British recovery gathering pace

LONDON (R) — Britain's economic recovery is gathering pace and economists said 1994 growth looks like outstripping the 2.75 per cent forecast by the government in June.

Revised data from the Central Statistical Office (CSO) showed that gross domestic product (GDP) grew at one per cent in the second quarter from the first rather than 0.9 per cent.

That meant the economy was 3.7 per cent bigger in the second quarter of 1993 rather than 3.3 per cent.

Economist Adrian Cooper at brokers James Capel said the big revisions added credence to Capel's forecast that 1994 growth would reach 3.5 per cent. He now expects the consensus forecast in both markets was subdued.

Some economists have been concerned that strong consumer spending would

suck in imports because British manufacturing industry was still too feeble to match demand. The government might then be obliged to raise interest rates to cool the economy down and prevent a balance-of-payments crisis.

However, recent trade figures have calmed those fears, since exports are growing more quickly than imports.

Separate CSP data brought further good trade news, though it was too historical to help the financial markets.

The CSO revised its estimate of the current account deficit in 1993 down to £10.3 billion (\$15.9 billion) from an estimate of £10.9 billion (\$16.8 billion) in June. It has forecast £9.5 billion (\$14.7 billion) for 1994, and economists said a deficit of that order was manageable.

German growth accelerating

BONN (R) — The German economy is picking up tempo, the labour market is stabilising and inflation is retreating, Economics Minister Guenter Rexrodt has said.

But he declined to comment on where the Bundesbank's official interest rates were headed.

The government has raised its projection for 1994 pan-German economic growth to 2.0-2.5 per cent from its earlier projection of 1.0-1.5 per cent, Mr. Rexrodt said.

"The German economy in both east and west finds itself in a clear updraft," he said.

West German gross domestic product (GDP) grew by one per cent in the second quarter of 1994 from the first quarter and was up two per cent from the same

quarter a year earlier. West German GDP is now expected to grow between 1.5-2.0 per cent in 1994, up from earlier forecasts of growth of 0.5-1.0 per cent.

Despite accelerating growth, prices in Germany were stabilising, Mr. Rexrodt said, adding that he expected inflation to slow to 2.5 per cent this year and 2.0 per cent in 1995.

Mr. Rexrodt said business expectations were the best they had been in 20 years. Upturns in the economies of Germany's major trading partners were also contributing to export strength despite the dollar's weakness, he said.

"We can live with the relatively strong mark," he said, because 70 per cent of German exports went to other European countries.

HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR WEDNESDAY AUGUST 24, 1994

By Thomas S. Pierson, Astrologer, Carroll Righter Foundation

GENERAL TENDENCIES: If you decide to get into civic work you will increase your prestige and make many new friends that will prove vital to your business interests. Be your own gregarious self and express your happiness.

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) This is an ideal day to be where you can gain knowledge and advance in career activities. Show more devotion to family members.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20) Study the best way to carry through with any agreements you have made and get the right results. Be wise in all of your decisions.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) You are now able to get the backing of higher-ups in a new project you have in mind. Express happiness tonight to your loved ones.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) Making needed changes where your work is concerned will bring good results at this time. Be logical in all of your decisions.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) Be your own gregarious self and express happiness with all the friends you can. Take no risks in motion or your could get into trouble.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) Have serious talks with associates so that you can take advantage of a new situation. Be more reassuring to your loved one of your devotion.

Birthstone of August:
Peridot — Golden Quartz

THE Daily Crossword



Business & Finance

A.Y. AUGUST 24, 1994

JORDAN TIMES, WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 24, 1994

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COMMONWEALTH GAMES

Australians fire world warning

VICTORIA (AFP) — Kieren Perkins and Samantha Riley struck gold with two world class performances in the Commonwealth pool on Monday.

The biggest name in Australian swimming and the revelation of the Games both came within a whisker of setting world records as the Australians finally produced the times to match all the hype.

Perkins, the 800m and 1,500m freestyle record holder, signalled his return to form with a devastating 400m swim to complete a hat-trick of Commonwealth golds.

The Australian, who failed to win a single race at the national trials, clocked 3:45.77 to leave the rest of the field trailing. His time was the fastest in the world this year by nearly four seconds and only 0.7sec outside the world record Evgeni Sadvoyi set to deny Perkins the 400m Olympic gold in Barcelona.

The 21-year-old, who was on course to beat Sadvoyi's world mark as he raced through 300m, said he could have gone faster but was unaware of his pace.

"I had a lot of speed left over the last 100, I didn't feel I was in a desperate struggle to get to the end," he said.

Perkins, who won the 1,500m title in Barcelona and had already won 200m and 4

x200m golds here, appears to have peaked at exactly the right time as he heads for the world championships in Rome next month.

"My objective coming into this meet was to get back to my best times of two years ago and I've done that," Perkins said.

"It gives me a lot of confidence into the 1500m and then on to Rome."

New Zealand's Danyon Loader took the silver in a New Zealand record of 3:49.65. Daniel Kowalski, who beat Perkins in the Australian trials, had to settle for bronze after leading the qualifying.

Nick Gillingham won England's fourth gold medal with victory in the 200m breaststroke, taking revenge over Australia's Phil Rogers, who had pipped him for the 100m gold, and keeping a promise he made to his father, Frank, just before he died in February.

"The last thing I said to him was what I would win here. This medal is for him," Gillingham said.

The world shortcourse champion's time of 2:12.54 was also the fastest in the world this year.

Rogers finished second, with defending champion Jon Cleveland taking the bronze.

Riley smashed the Commonwealth 100m breast-

stroke record to add that gold to her 200m triumph. Riley, who clocked 1:06.02, was only 0.1sec outside Silke Hoerner's seven-year-old world record.

"I knew if I could drop four seconds in the 200m I could drop a second at 100m," Riley said.

Rebecca Brown, who had completely eclipsed Riley with a string of world class performances and a 200m world record in the spring again had to settle for second. Penelope Heyns won South Africa's first swim medal by taking the bronze.

While 17-year-old Brown tries to rebuild her shattered confidence in time for Rome, the revitalised Riley is now contemplating an assault on both world records.

"I have to admit I was a bit disappointed when I saw the time tonight. But I have another chance in Rome and I'll have to try and keep things together until then."

Petria Thomas led the Australians to the first medals sweep in the Games with gold in the 100m butterfly. Commonwealth record holder Susan O'Neill was just piped into second place. Eli Overton won bronze.

A memorable night was rounded off by Chris Fyler anchoring the 4x100m freestyle team to Australia's 16th gold of the Games.

Hopes high for S. African boxing golds

VICTORIA (AFP) — Stephanus Carr, one of South Africa's two strong gold medal contenders, stopped Barbados fighter Esley Padmore here on Monday to get his Commonwealth Games light-welterweight challenge off the ground.

National coach Dan Bushney predicted Carr could now win boxing gold in this traditionally strong South African sport.

Four out of six South African fighters got past the first round and Bushney is backing Carr, 20, and Irvin Buhlalil for a medal.

Lightweight Buhlalil, a 19-year-old Zulu, has unwittingly become famous. He is the first ever black South African to compete in the Commonwealth Games. The last time South Africa competed, in 1958, only whites were in the side.

Buhlalil, like fellow black them members Victor Kunene, a light-middleweight, and flyweight Masibulele Makepula, were only allowed to fight other black fighters title 1991.

Now apartheid is abolished and Nelson Mandela, who used to box himself, is the first black president of the country.

The other members of the team — welterweight Jose Mestre, light-middleweight Floris Duplessis, and Carr — are white fighters.

"I'm cool," said Buhlalil, a Durban Finishing School commerce student. "I hope to be in the medals. I'm very positive."

In 1958, South Africa won four golds in the light-welterweight, welterweight, light-middleweight and heavyweight categories, and have won 12 golds in all.

Carr, who stopped Padmore after 1 minute 53 seconds of the third round, would not be drawn on whether he would become number 13.

"This is my first big event and I'm very happy with how I boxed today. But boxing is so different at international level. You need to concentrate harder because of all the distractions," Carr said.

Bushney explained how competing at these games is a disadvantage for South Africans.

He said the competitors are so thrilled to be competing with other nations that it is not easy to concentrate on their sport.

"I have been a coach for 33 years, but have never been

involved with such a terrific event as this. The Canadians have been great hosts and we have been overwhelmed by the reception.

"I had tears in my eyes at the opening ceremony when I saw our flag being carried. If we can win just one boxing bronze medal, it would mean so much to the sport back home."

The South Africans will stage the World Amateur championships in Johannesburg in October and Bushney said it would be "great" to have a host country Commonwealth medalist competing.

The government is financially supporting an intensive development programme in the South African townships to boost amateur boxing at grass roots level. The country has about 5,000 amateur boxers.

Apart from Carr, South Africa's other fighters have had mixed fortunes so far.

Buhlalil beat Swaziland's Patrick Kekana 15-3 on points in a lightweight contest on Friday.

Masibulele Makepula, at light-flyweight, beat Australian Aaron Everett 26-10 on points on Saturday.

"I have been a coach for 33 years, but have never been

Tanzanian official accuses judges of racial bias

VICTORIA (R) — One of Tanzania's top boxing officials accused Commonwealth Games judges of racial bias on Monday after a potential gold medalist suffered a controversial points defeat by a Scottish opponent.

Jamal Nasor Adi, general team manager of the Tanzanian boxing squad, hit out bitterly at the International Amateur Boxing Association (AIBA) after flyweight Mbwanza Matumala lost a narrow decision to Paul Shepherd.

"I'm blaming AIBA for treating us badly, especially blacks," said Nasor Adi. "When we're playing with whites, all the time they make us lose. I've been watching the championship and it's happened three or four times before. I'm sure Matumala would have won a gold medal. AIBA are killing boxing in Africa."

Tanzanian officials appealed against the decision which left Matumala, one of three brothers hoping for a Commonwealth boxing medal in Victoria, open-mouthed with astonishment in the centre of the ring.

Bebeto back after unauthorised extra break

The judges — from Wales, Australia, India, Malaysia and Nigeria — had shepherd a lop-sided 8-2 ahead going into the final round which Matumala took 6-3.

The 11-8 verdict brought a chorus of boos from the crowd and the dejected Matumala was given a standing ovation as he left the arena.

A jury will consider the Tanzanian protest on Tuesday, but Nasor Adi also claimed an AIBA official had attempted to block his appeal.

"I went up to him and he said 'you can't appeal unless you have the rule-book.' He had one but he even refused to give it to me to see what was written there."

Nasor Adi was eventually escorted from the ringside by two policemen, but Tanzanian honour was partially restored soon afterwards when the eldest Matumala brother, lightweight Haji, won an undisputed 24-7 points verdict over Zambian Davis Mwale.

A night of strange decisions reached its logical conclusion when Canadian Mike

Strange won a single-point verdict over Irvin Buhlalil, the first black South African to represent his country in the games.

The Durban lightweight, who has set his sights on gold at the 1996 Olympics, was floored in the final seconds but many observers felt he had done enough earlier to win.

The defeat took some of the gloss off South Africa's encouraging showing in their first Commonwealth Games since 1958 when they headed the boxing gold medal table with four.

After a gap of 36 years since heavyweight Daniel Becker won in Cardiff, it was left to middleweight Floris du Plessis to try and put the Republic back on the boxing podium.

The bald du Plessis put up a gallant struggle but was eventually stopped in the second round by Kenyan Peter Wanyoike. He is now assured of a bronze along with Nigerian Rasmus Ojeynay.

Canada's Rowan Donaldson, who prefers Ron as his

Christie bans media talk as Ladejo bubbles

VICTORIA (AFP) — Chalk-and-cheese English track champions Linford Christie and Duaine Ladejo reacted in contrasting styles here on Monday as they began their Commonwealth Games challenge.

Christie, the world, Olympic and European 100m champion, flexed his muscles with a blistering record-equalising second heat performance — but then kept his jaw clamped firmly shut as he refused to discuss his performance.

While 17-year-old Brown, who had eclipsed Riley with a string of world class performances and a 200m world record in the spring again had to settle for second. Penelope Heyns won South Africa's first swim medal by taking the bronze.

Rising 400m star Ladejo, however, who also won a European title in Helsinki by eclipsing Roger Black, could not stop bubbling after his two opening wins.

Meanwhile the first athletic medal of the games, the men's hammer, went to Australia's Sean Carlin.

He saw off a trio of Englishmen to blast out a winning throw of 73.48m, with Paul Head (70.18) and Peter Vivian (69.80) taking silver and bronze.

Christie, who jogged to 10.38sec in his opener before posting a fine 10.02 which equalled his own Auckland Games record, said sharply: "I've got work to do — not talking between rounds."

He was quickly joined in the semi-finals by Namibian Frankie Fredericks, the world 200m champion, who ran a scorching 10.04.

Olapade Adenikin of Nigeria, still sporting stitches above his left eye after a brawl with American rival Dennis Mitchel in Zurich, also qualified impressively in 10.21, with world indoor 60m champion Bruny Surin not far behind.

Ladejo, a huge favourite for the 400m after beating 1986 Commonwealth winner Bada as the big danger, and Bada obliged by qualifying for the semi-final behind Trinidadian Neil de Silva.

One man to struggle to find his best form on Monday was world champion Col in Jackson in the 110m hurdles.

The Welshman made things hard for himself in his opening race, smashing three hurdles but still winning in 13.52 secs, while England's Tony Jarrett, the world silver medalist, won the second heat.

The stars of the women's

Linford Christie

other runners to help me reach another level.

"That doesn't mean I'm saying I can't be beaten — hit me if I ever say that. I know I was looking across at them in the final straight, but that's not arrogance or cockiness. I just wanted to see how they looked. I'm learning."

The 23-year-old highlighted Nigerian Sunday Bada as the big danger, and Bada obliged by qualifying for the semi-final behind Trinidadian Neil de Silva.

One man to struggle to find his best form on Monday was world champion Col in Jackson in the 110m hurdles.

Bahamas star Troy Kamp did not start, leaving Steve Smith, England's world silver winner, to head one group with compatriot Brendan Reily the other.

European indoor Euro winner Dalton Grant and Australian Tim Forsyth, another medal hope, also qualified.

Norway gets first world road race title

CAPO D'ORLANDO, Sicily (R) — Monica Valviki underline her world number one ranking when she gave Norway its first world road race title in a sprint finish to the 86.4 km racer on Tuesday.

She held off Belgian Patsy Meijerman, with American Jeannie Golay third, as the main field finished in the same time of two hours eight minutes three seconds.

Valviki missed her chance last year when the world title race was in Norway, crashing on the final lap, but made more of an impact this year.

She has won many tour stages, as well as taking the World Cup stage race in the Netherlands, and seldom

been out of the top three in her events.

She said: "I was number one in the world rankings before this race, but I still would not say that I am the best in the world. It was tough for me because I was alone without team mates, and I had to use the other riders. I could not make too much effort otherwise it would have destroyed me for the sprint."

On the final 12.3-km lap a breakaway developed involving Imelda Chiappa of Italy, Swiss Luzia Zberg and French riders Catherine Marcal and Cecile Odin.

When four-times world champion Jeannie Longo joined them it looked like the

decisive move but, as the size of the group increased, constant chasing pulled them back on the final climb with seven kms remaining.

In the descent, four riders crashed while avoiding another faller but none was seriously injured. Italian Michela Fanini, who had been among the leaders, was among those who crashed.

Golay, who took her second bronze in three days, said: "I come from Florida so I can handle the heat but everyone has to be sure to drink enough."

On Sunday, she helped the U.S. to third place in the 50-km team time trial at Palermo.

Australia tops in individual gymnastics

VICTORIA (AFP) — Australian gymnasts picked up five individual apparatus gold medals at the Commonwealth Games Monday after Rebecca Stoyel and Sally Wills added to the three men won in the morning session.

"We came out and did the best job we could as a team. I think today we answered our critics," said Brennan Dowrick who successfully defended his Commonwealth title on the pommel horse.

Canada's Stella Umeh, the all-around champion, rounded off her career in international events by taking the vault gold. Competing with an ankle stress fracture, Umeh had a painful landing on the beam: In visible discomfort for the final floor exercise, the tough Canadian was supported by her mother who called from the stands: "Come on Stella. It's the last one."

Umeh's 9.375 finally placed her fourth, but she remained the single most successful woman gymnast of the Games.

England's Neil Thomas put in a winning performance on the floor — his specialty discipline and also earned a vault bronze after failing on his first leading.

Canada's Alan Nolet, rescued his team with a gold in the men's last event, the high bar. Nolet, like Thomas one of the oldest competitors here, also won a bronze on the pommel horse.

It was also a good day for the English.

Peter McDermott took the gold on the rings to share

Army shooters win games gold for Cyprus

VICTORIA (AFP) — A pair of 20-year-olds shrugged off bad weather and landed a gold medal for tiny Cyprus in Commonwealth Games shooting here on Monday.

Shotgun duo Antonis Andreou and Christos Kourtelas, fresh from their national army service, won the skeet open, an outdoor event, in cold, overcast and windy conditions at Heal's Range.

"We may be a small nation but we have a lion's heart," said a proud Lakis Psimolopis, president of the Cypriot shooting federation.

The Cypriot score of 189 out of a possible 200 points shooting clay pigeons was three points better than the next best by New Zealand and Scotland, England and Wales.

The Kiwis, Brian Thomson and Geoffrey Jukes, edged the Scottish pair of Michael Thomson and Ian Marsden to the silver on their last 10 shots.

It was Cyprus' first shooting gold medal in a Commonwealth Games but Psimolopis was not surprised.

The Cypriots had won the team event at the Milan world championships prior to coming here and had been confident of the title, he said.

Kourtelas, whose shotgun career began when his father took him partridge hunting, said: "I am proud to win here as

NEWS IN BRIEF

Munitions blast wounds 3 Israeli soldiers

TEL AVIV (AP) — An explosion at a munitions depot in the occupied West Bank town of Bethlehem Tuesday wounded three Israeli soldiers, the army said. Israeli radios said the blast appeared to be accidental but the army said it was probing a possibility of sabotage. Israel's Itim news agency said the explosion occurred shortly after 1430 (1130 GMT) in a tent where ammunition is kept at the military government headquarters in Bethlehem, setting off a chain of other blasts that wounded the soldiers. It said that the depot is located near a tent where Palestinian detainees are kept. Two troopers were injured slightly and a third was listed in moderate condition the army said.

Iran trains tribesmen in military exercises

NICOSIA (AP) — Iran launched manoeuvres Tuesday aimed at training tribes along the western border with Iraq in defensive military exercises, Tehran Radio reported. The broadcast said several "battalions" comprising tribesmen from across western Bakhtaran province will take part in the two-day exercises. It said tribesmen in traditional garb and on horseback trained in the open fields in tactics aimed at stopping "enemy" incursions.

Palestinian minister appeals for more Japanese aid

TOKYO (AFP) — Ahmad Qureia, the Palestinian economic and trade minister, called on Japan Tuesday to expand economic aid for Palestinian self-rule. "The Palestinian police are a peacekeeping police. They are not military forces," he told a news conference. "Therefore I believe that support for the police is real support for the peace process." Japan has pledged \$200 million over two years in aid to Palestinian autonomy, by financing reconstruction of the West Bank town of Jericho and the Gaza Strip. Mr. Qureia said he had asked Japanese leaders to extend Japan's aid pledge from two to five years to cover the transition period while Palestinian authorities face "serious challenges" in maintaining peace and economic development. He said Japanese officials had reacted favourably and that "there will be very good results."

Kabul denies Russian border claims

KABUL (AFP) — A presidential spokesman here Tuesday refuted Russian allegations that their security troops stationed along the sensitive Afghan-Tajik international border were recently attacked from inside Afghanistan. "We are following our usual policy of non-interference," the spokesman Abdul Aziz Morad said. "We consider this a globally recognised principle and we expect the same treatment from others," Mr. Morad added. Afghanistan considers the issue of Tajikistan an internal question, and it was "up to the Tajik people themselves to solve their own problems," he said. Mr. Morad said the large population of Tajik refugees still living in northern Afghanistan were afforded humanitarian assistance only, denying alleged military training or arming of the refugees. "The clashes on the border were between Tajik guerrillas on one side and Tajik and Russian soldiers on the other side," said Mr. Morad.

Heat kills 30 in eastern Sudan

KHARTOUM (AFP) — A wave of crushing heat and humidity have claimed the lives of 30 persons in the eastern region of Port Sudan, the army newspaper Al Guwat Al Misla said Tuesday. The paper said the death toll reached its peak on Friday when 11 died. Temperatures in eastern Sudan have recently soared to 44 degrees Centigrade (12 Fahrenheit).

Two Afghan drug smugglers killed in clash

TEHRAN (AFP) — Iranian police shot dead two Afghan drug traffickers and seriously wounded another in eastern Iran, the official Islamic Republic News Agency (IRNA) reported Tuesday. The clash occurred during a security operation Monday in the mountainous Ahangaran region in Khorasan province near the Afghan border, IRNA said. A fourth Afghan drug trafficker was arrested. The security forces seized 106 kilogrammes of opium in the operation.

Three members of Dev Sol killed in prison

ISTANBUL (AFP) — Two men and a woman convicted for being members of the extreme-left revolutionary group Dev-Sol have been found murdered in two separate prisons in Turkey, police said Tuesday. The victims were discovered over the weekend along with a communiqué left near their bodies which said that they had been "punished" by other Dev-Sol inmates for collaborating with authorities and causing the deaths of other members of the underground organisation, police said. Two of the victims, Hasan Hulusi Küçük and Sümey Aydin, were found impaled in the prison of Bayrampasa, in Istanbul, and the third, Ahmet Celal Özklü, was found strangled to death in the courtyard of a prison in Ankara, police added. Prison officials said a riot erupted in Bayrampasa prison after the discovery of the two bodies but it had been put down by Monday evening. Several inmates were injured during the riot which protested stiffer security measures following the two murders, the officials said.

Turkish planes hit Kurd bases in Iraq

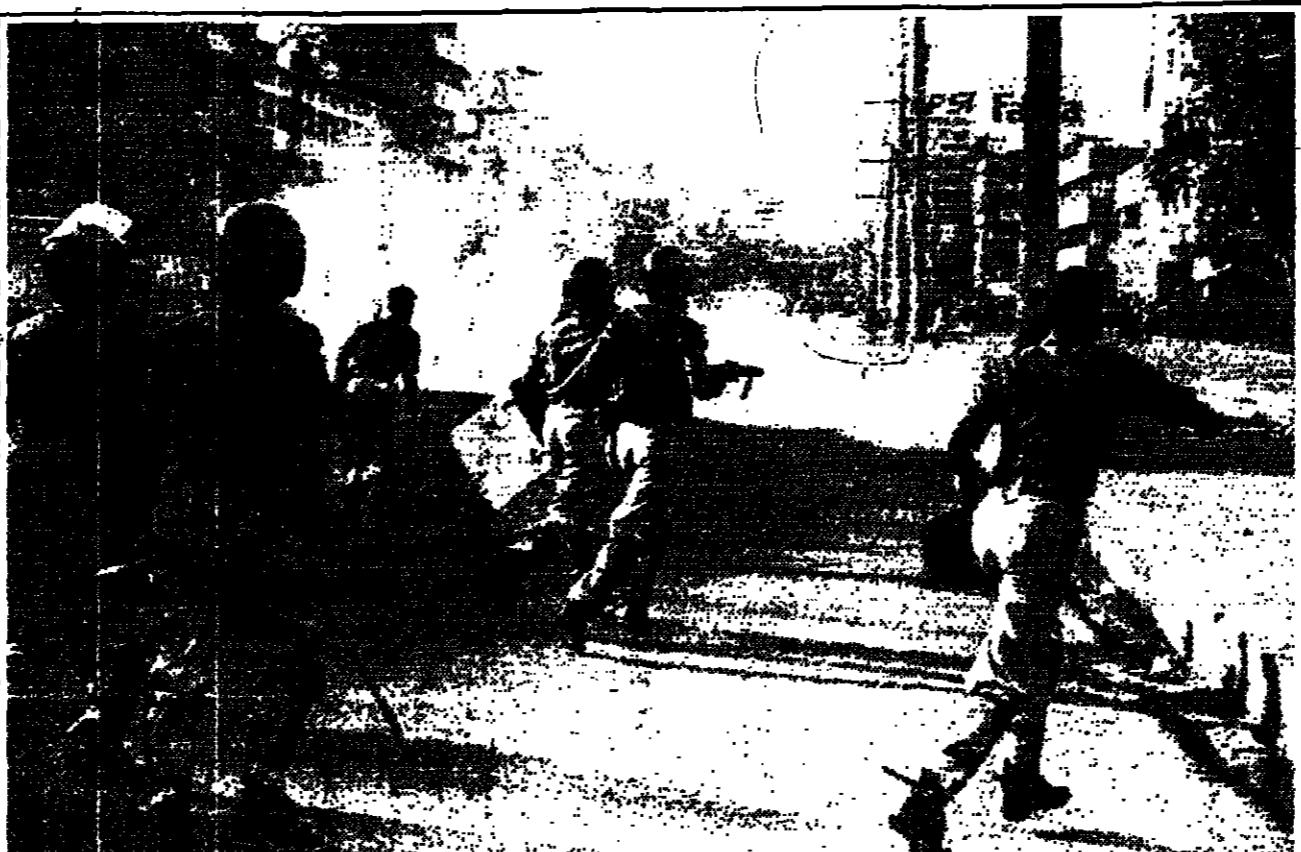
ANKARA (R) — Turkish jets struck a Kurdish guerrilla base 230 kilometres inside northern Iraq on Tuesday, the latest in a series of cross-border raids aimed at separatist forces, a military spokesman said. He said 32 planes took part in the attack on a base 60 kilometres southwest of a big Kurdish Labour Party (PKK) camp at Zaleh. All planes returned safely to base. There was no immediate estimate of casualties, pending a reconnaissance mission over the region, he said. The military said on Monday it had carried out raids on Aug. 15 and 20, killing 92 guerrillas. The latest attack marked the eighth such assault within a month.

Bomb explodes near Turkish palace

ISTANBUL (R) — A bomb exploded on Tuesday in the garden of Istanbul's Topkapi palace, causing little damage and no injuries, police said. The 15th century palace, one of Istanbul's major tourist sites, is closed on Tuesdays. On Monday an explosion outside a military recruiting station in Istanbul killed three Turks and wounded four. Last week, a Romanian man died from injuries sustained in an Aug. 12 blast at a crowded international bus station.

Court suspends Egyptian school veil decree

CAIRO (AP) — Government attempts to curb Islamic influence in schools were dealt a blow on Tuesday when a court suspended a decree that girls must have their parents' permission to wear the veil in class. Education Minister Hussein Khatib Bahaaeddin issued the ruling which was to come into effect in the new school year but it was challenged by Islamists lawyers representing schoolgirls' parents. The Cairo administrative court on Tuesday ordered the suspension of the decree, saying it would later on whether it was constitutional. The lawyers said that the decree violated the dictates of Islam, as therefore unconstitutional. Al Azhar, the world's Sunni Muslim authority, also denounced the government's measure. The Egyptian constitution is based on Islamic Shari'a law, which rules that girls who reach puberty should wear the veil. But the minister said that his order did not ban the veil, but ensured that girls would not be forced to wear it by extremist teachers.



CLASHES IN DHAKA: Armed riot police on Tuesday chase supporters of deposed Bangladeshi President Hussain Muhammad Ershad who tried to hold a rally in central Dhaka. Witnesses said at least 100 people, including

policemen were injured, in violent clashes during which police fired rubber bullets and tear gas. Mr. Ershad's opposition Jatiya Party supporters blasted home-made bombs and pelted stones (AFP photo)

20 victims of Morocco air crash foreigners

RABAT (Agencies) — Twenty foreign travellers were among the 44 passengers and crew killed in the crash of a Royal Air Morocco aircraft on an internal flight Sunday, officials said Tuesday.

Among the foreign victims were eight Italians, five French, four Dutch, two Kuwaitis, and one German woman identified as Elizabeth Steckel who was travelling with her 13-month-old daughter of Moroccan nationality.

The ATR 42 aircraft was on a flight to Casablanca and came down in remote terrain some 10 minutes after take-off from the southern coastal city of Agadir, killing all 40 passengers and four crew.

The crash was probably due to technical failure, state-run television reported Monday.

The aircraft's flight recorders, including the black box, had been sent to Casablanca for analysis, and would probably confirm the technical failure theory, the television said.

One of the Kuwaitis aboard was a prince and the brother of Kuwait Interior Minister Ahmad Al Hammoud Al Jaber Al Sabah, the television said.

Stambouli was well-known in Algerian intellectual circles for his writings in favour

Zeroual is ready to allow opposition to contact FIS

ALGIERS (Agencies) — Algerian President Liamine Zeroual has moved to stem violent political strife by inviting the opposition to talk to the banned Islamic Salvation Front (FIS), though some parties are hostile to contacts with the fundamentalists.

Mr. Zeroual on Monday encouraged five parties taking part in talks with the government — all favourable to FIS participation in politics — to go and meet the leaders of the dissolved party in prison "to try and convince them to join the new talks."

Meanwhile, Abdou Kader Hachani, a senior FIS official, was reported Tuesday by the daily El Hiwar to have ended, at the request of the FIS leadership, a hunger strike he began on Aug. 8.

He began the action to press to be put on trial as quickly as possible and was considered a political prisoner, according to El Hiwar, which said that Mr. Hachani is currently in a cell with ordinary criminals.

Meanwhile, Islamic guerrillas were apparently continuing to carry out their threat to harm teachers and pupils when sociology professor Kabah Stambouli, 65, was shot dead Tuesday morning as he emerged from his home at Tizi Ouzou in Kabylie, police said.

Stambouli was well-known in Algerian intellectual circles for his writings in favour

of a tolerant Islam.

The Armed Islamic Group (GIA), which has vowed violently to disrupt the start of the new school year, is also thought responsible for hanging the deputy head of a training college in Sidi Mustapha over the weekend and for blowing up or setting fire to some 20 schools and other academic institutions.

Islamic extremists began a violent campaign that has claimed more than 3,000 lives since the army intervened in January 1992 to cancel the second round of a general election the FIS was poised to win.

Mr. Zeroual stressed that before they could rejoin the political mainstream, FIS leaders must publicly adhere to principles which are "incontrovertible and non-

negotiable" and condemn violence, respect the constitutions, respect Islam as the state religion, allow political pluralism and democracy.

Mr. Zeroual recalled in the statement that last January he met jailed FIS leaders who had confirmed their willingness to contribute to ending the violence. Mr. Zeroual was then defence minister, a post he still holds.

FIS leaders Ali Djeddi and Abdou Kader Boukhaman, freed on February 22, had been "mandated to work for the halt to the violence," said the statement. "Six months after this measure, there has been no result."

The decision to allow encounters with FIS leaders could break the isolation surrounding the movement and return its voice to the mainstream with reports by politicians from the prison cells.

FIS leaders now communicate with followers via occasional letters sneaked out of prison or through its network of exiles in Europe and the United States. In a communiqué following the meeting, the president reiterated that he was not opposed to dialogue with the FIS — if they renounced violence.

The meeting was to continue on Wednesday. Three parties have refused to attend. Participants at the talks reported a more open attitude by authorities than in two previous encounters.

Syrians prepare to go to the polls

DAMASCUS (AFP) — Intellectuals, affluent traders and actors are among those hoping to win seats in the Syrian parliament when a two-day poll starts on Wednesday.

Women are also hoping to build on the 21 places they currently hold in the 250-seat People's Assembly.

It will be the sixth legislative election in Syria since President Hafez Al Assad, then defence minister, seized power in November 1970. The current parliament's four-year mandate ran out on June 10.

More than seven million Syrians are registered to vote on Wednesday and Thursday.

So far 7,266 candidates are down to contest the elections, but the final number will not be known until late Tuesday.

One thing is certain — the majority of seats will again go to the National Progressive Front (NPF), a coalition of seven parties headed by Al Assad's ruling Baath Arab Socialist Party.

Of the 250 seats, 127 have been set aside for "workers and small farmers" by presidential decree, which describes such constituents as "the productive force on which the economic development of the country depends."

The other 123 are reserved for other categories.

Some 8,500 polling booths have been posted in the country's 15 regions. The poll is conducted according to a first-past-the-post system, the winning candidates being those who gain the most votes on a list.

The most skillful contenders hoping to ride on the coat-tails of the NPF have joined "open" lists run by the coalition.

They include intellectuals, merchants and actors encouraged by the success of about 20 colleagues in the last elections in 1990 and a bitter contest which has broken out among them.

Banners proclaiming the profession of each candidate have been hung up calling for development and modernisation, even though their electoral programmes remain unclear.

Meanwhile the NPF candidates have been canvassing under the slogan of "national unity."

Women are hoping to improve on their 1990 success, when the number of female deputies increased from 18 to 21.

Peres: Germans could serve as peacekeepers

BONN (Agencies) — Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres said here Tuesday he had no objection to German soldiers taking part in U.N. peacekeeping operations in the Middle East and backed Germany's campaign for a permanent seat on the U.N. Security Council.

"What we say soldier, we think of the war," said Mr. Peres in a reference to World War II. "But peace mission, why not?" Mr. Peres said, adding, however, that he "would prefer one million tourists to a 100,000 soldiers."

His statement was made six weeks after Germany's constitutional court ruled German armed forces had the right to operate anywhere in the world, clearing the way for the country's participation in U.N. peacekeeping missions.

Mr. Peres called on Germans to ask themselves what contribution Germany could make to the peace process and the new order in the Middle East.

On Monday, Mr. Peres, warning that nuclear smuggling from Eastern Europe could turn into an international threat, thanked Germany for its efforts to crack down on the illegal trade.

Mr. Peres said Bonn, which is pressing Moscow to tighten security around former Soviet nuclear plants, was right to try to seal the sources it blames for a rash of black market shipments uncovered in Germany in recent months.

"They may not be military grade and they may not be in large quantities, but the potential danger is great," Mr. Peres said of several secret shipments of deadly plutonium and other materials.

3 Somalis killed, 3 caught after ambush on U.N. force

MOGADISHU (Agencies) — Indian soldiers of the U.N. peacekeeping force in Somalia ended the hunt for the Somali killers of seven of their comrades after most of the gunmen got away, a U.N. spokesman said on Tuesday.

The two men also discussed extreme-right violence in Germany, Mr. Peres saying he was satisfied with the degree to which German political parties had turned their back on racism and xenophobia.

In a meeting with Rita Suessmuth, president on the Bundestag (the lower house of the German parliament), the Israeli foreign minister said he was confident Germany would fight Nazism, anti-Semitism and "international terrorism," a Bundestag spokesman said.

Mr. Peres called on Germans to ask themselves what contribution Germany could make to the peace process and the new order in the world affairs.

The search for the attackers, who fired anti-aircraft guns and mortars at Indian soldiers in the village of Burleego, 110 kilometres southwest of Mogadishu on Monday, ended with the killing of three Somalis and the capture of three others.

U.N. military spokesman Richard McDonald said Indian helicopters and ground troops gave up the search for the Somali militiamen who had apparently dispersed into the bush and surrounding villages following Monday's ambush.

The militiamen, whose weapons included mortars and anti-aircraft guns, had attacked a U.N. convoy made up of three civilian road contractors escorted by about 20 Indian peacekeepers in three vehicles.

The seven-hour battle which followed the attack was the bloodiest clash between U.N. forces and militiamen for months.

Major McDonald said the three detainees would be interrogated by personnel of the U.N. Operation in Somalia (UNOSOM), but the motive for Monday's attack was not yet known.

Maj. McDonald said that nine soldiers had been injured and not six, as first announced by UNOSOM on Monday, and that all were in stable condition Tuesday in hospitals in Baidoa and Mogadishu.

He added that it was possible

that more of the Somalis had been killed or wounded, but only three deaths could be confirmed.

On Monday, Maj. McDonald described the ambush as an unprovoked and unprovoked coordinated attack.

A number of weapons-equipped vehicles, normally used by Somali clan militia fighters, were destroyed as U.N. troops fought back the attack, Mr. McDonald said.

The incident brought to 106 the number of U.N. peacekeepers killed in Somalia since May 1993.

U.N. Secretary General Boutros Ghali recommended Friday that the United Nations immediately cut its personnel in Somalia by 1,500 and that the force eventually be cut down to 15,000. U.N. military personnel in Somalia currently number 18,761.

Dr. Ghali said the force should be reduced to 12,000 by the end of October or during November.

In the latest attack, the

militias struck in territory held by the Habre Gedir clan of Mohammed Farah Aideed, the warlord who battled U.N. and American troops in the streets of Mogadishu last year.

Habre Gedir forces have

been shooting and looting

their way through much of

southern and central Somalia for months.

Major McDonald said the

three detainees

were captured in

the bush during

the night.

The three detainees

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